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# COLONIAL VIRGINIA S PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

*BY*

MARY NEWTON STANARD



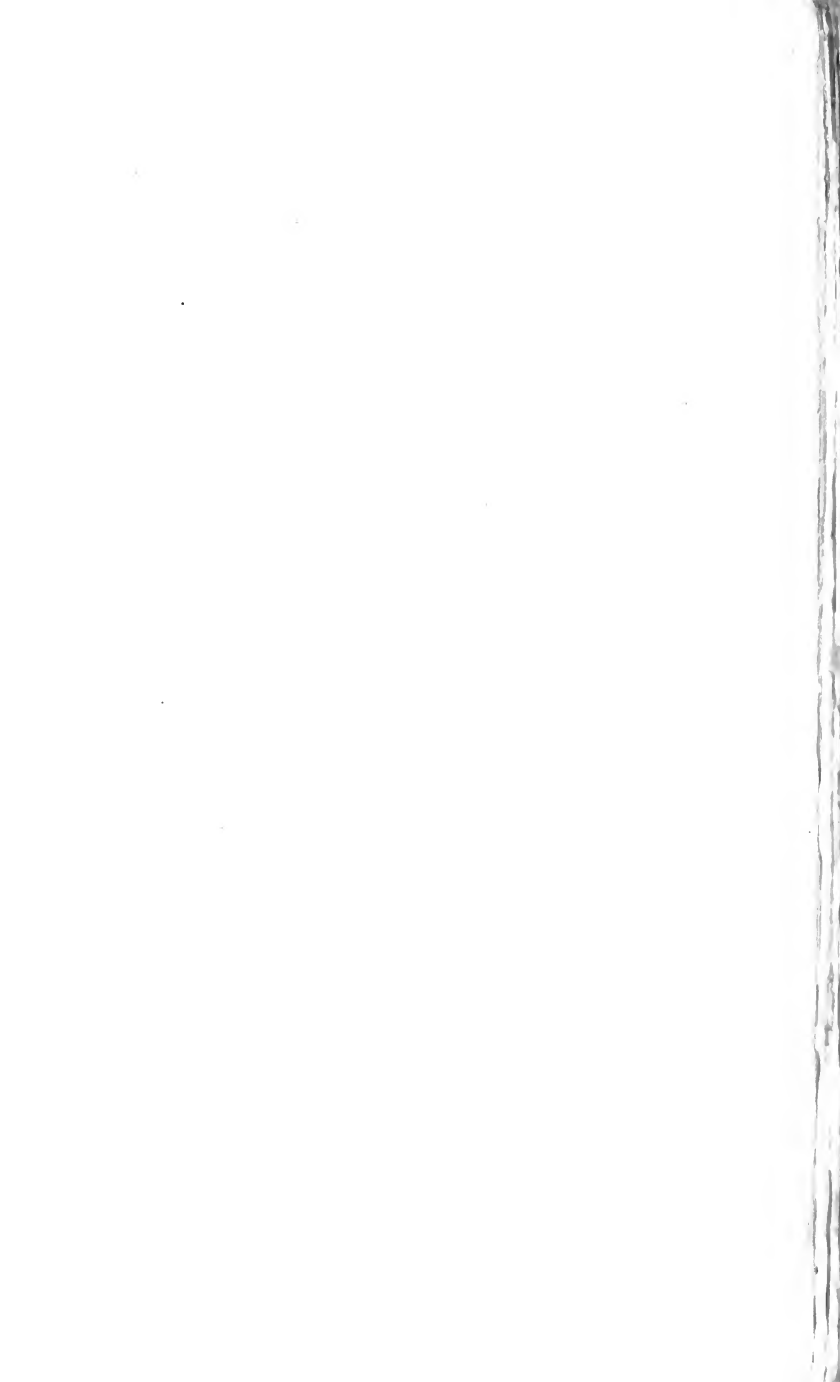




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**COLONIAL VIRGINIA  
ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS**

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Printed upon 1570

CHURCH OF HOLY TRINITY, BETHLEHEM, MIDDLESEX, CANADA

CONFIRMATION RECORDS

CHILDREN OF HON. PHILIP GRAYES, OF "BRANDON," MIDDLESEX COUNTY  
Painted about 1750

HCS  
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# COLONIAL VIRGINIA

## ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

BY  
**MARY NEWTON STANARD**  
AUTHOR OF "THE DREAMER—THE LIFE-STORY OF EDGAR ALLAN POE"  
AND "THE STORY OF BACON'S REBELLION"

*WITH 93 ILLUSTRATIONS*



PHILADELPHIA AND LONDON  
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TO  
W. G. S.



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## PREFACE

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OW may we call to life the everyday men and women of other times, obtain glimpses of them in their homes, going about their business or pursuing pleasure, know them as they were known to their families and neighbors? Not by reading history. History records events and names a few of those who figured in them, but no matter how ingeniously the string is pulled these generally seem more like puppets than people—to be made of bronze or marble rather than flesh and blood. A gossipy letter, though crumbling and yellow, telling what company the writer had for dinner and what there was to eat, the jokes that were cracked and healths drunk; a fragment of a diary giving the neighborhood news, the condition of the crops or the latest political excitement; a tailor's or a milliner's bill; a will; an inventory; a court record of a lawsuit or a trial, will make a bygone day more real than volumes of history.

Notwithstanding the lamentable destruction of early records—all of those of a number of counties having been lost—Virginia is rich in this graphic kind of material. Much of it is preserved in still existing colonial county records, in files of that quaint newspaper, *The Virginia Gazette*, in collections of family papers, in old pamphlets, in privately published and other books most of which are now out of print, and in journals like the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* and the *William and Mary College Quarterly Magazine*. But these scattered sources of information are inaccessible to the general reader—the existence of many of them is known only to a few special students—and no attempt has hitherto been made to gather

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## PREFACE

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what is most illustrative from them all into one volume, with the purpose of giving a picture, or series of pictures, of life in the colony from its settlement to the Revolution.

This is a tremendous—a daring—task, of course, like attempting to make a few drops of water illustrate the character of the ocean, and has necessitated careful selection of the salient and elimination of every item that could be spared; indeed, many items as interesting as those which have been used have been rejected only because they would have been duplications. For instance, it has been impossible to name all the owners of Turkey-work chairs, silver tankards, great looking-glasses and coaches-and-six, all the wearers of silver-hilted swords and gold-laced hats; all who sent their sons abroad to be educated or who bequeathed property for the benefit of the poor or the establishment of free schools; all the owners of a “parcel”—meaning a collection—of books, or of fine libraries, even. And so in each case a sufficient number of examples to indicate the whole has been given.

I have taken my data first hand from original manuscripts or printed copies of them to be found in the publications referred to. In the very few exceptions to this rule credit to the writer to whom I am indebted has been given.

In my endeavor to give a true presentation of life in the colony—to deliver a “round, unvarnished tale”—I have had the incalculable advantage of the advice and guidance of my husband, William G. Stanard, Secretary of the Virginia Historical Society and Editor of the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, who has aided me at every step of my laborious, though fascinating, research, and has placed at my disposal his own great mass of notes from county and other records and his knowledge



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## PREFACE

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of the Virginia people acquired by life-long study. I am especially indebted to him for information and counsel in the treatment of the **L**ater **E**migrants.

In the list of illustrations, acknowledgment has been made to those who have kindly permitted the use of pictures, but I desire in addition to thank them most cordially for this courtesy.

M. N. S.

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

July 24, 1917



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COLONIAL VIRGINIA  
ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS



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I

## THE VIRGINIA PEOPLE

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### I—THE FOUNDERS OF THE COLONY



THREE HUNDRED years ago, as every school child knows, European civilization was already comparatively ripe. England had her great churches, her palaces, her universities, and had enjoyed golden ages of chivalry and of letters. But America was still a wilderness—its

only roads the trail of the Indian, the track of the deer, the bear or other wild creature, its only sign of human habitation clusters of bark huts and such patches of corn, beans, and tobacco as savages were able to cultivate by scratching the ground with the most primitive implements of wood and stone.

What manner of men were the emigrants from that old world to this new one who made the beginnings of the change which in three centuries has become a transformation?

We know that, charmed with travellers' tales of an El Dorado, or aflame with the spirit of adventure, or with zeal to add to their king's earthly dominions and win a heathen people for a heavenly one, and with an eager curiosity hard for a blasé age like ours to comprehend, these men left their familiar haunts, their more or less comfortable fire-sides, their friends and relatives and the women they loved. Crowded into toy ships in which they endured indescribable miseries and were over and over again swept far out of their course by violent gales, they crossed three thousand miles of ocean and, in spite of dangers, disappointments,

illness, famine, death, sowed here the seeds of the white man's civilization—the white man's religion. Who were they, and what was their condition in that distant land whose manners and ways they transplanted to this?

The question is a difficult one, for the emigrant did not concern himself about our interest in him, or stop to make a family tree, though here and there an allusion in a will, letter, or legal paper in Virginia or England, or a rare reference in a foreign pedigree to a member of a family who had come to America, gives us a hint as to who one of them was at home.

Thanks to the lively "Historie" of Captain John Smith we have a comparatively complete record of the little band of "first planters" who came in 1607 and the two "supplies" added to them in 1607-08. These three parties brought, in all, about 295 persons—the first settlers numbering 105, the first "supply" 120, and the second "supply" about 70, and Captain Smith gives us the names of nearly all of them. Of the whole number ninety-two are described as "gentlemen," forty-five as "laborers," fourteen as "tradesmen," seven as "tailors," four as "carpenters," three as "surgeons," two as "apothecaries," two as "goldsmiths," two as "refiners," two as "blacksmiths," a "jeweler," a "perfumer," a "gunsmith," a "cooper," a "sailor," a "barber," a "bricklayer," a "mason," a "drummer," a "tobacco pipe-maker," six "boys," eight "Dutchmen and Poles" and "some others," including two women.

The term "gentleman" was a comprehensive one at the time and was applied to men of widely varying social rank. In England during the later Tudor and early Stuart periods there was general aspiration for heraldic distinction and it was the fashion for successful men to secure coats-



ARMOR DUG UP AT JAMESTOWN



A PALISADED FORT



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## THE VIRGINIA PEOPLE

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of-arms. Prosperous merchants would buy land and become country gentlemen; men of yeoman origin, like Captain Smith, would become army officers and be styled "gentleman"; and of course the landed families of ancient, as well as those of more recent, descent were included in the gentry.

In regard to most of our ninety-two earliest of Virginia "gentlemen," there is but little known. Some of them, like Master George Percy, brother of the Earl of Northumberland, and author of a "Discourse," which is one of the valuable sources of information in regard to the first settlement, and Francis West, brother of Lord Delaware, were younger sons of noblemen. Others bore the names of good old English families. Of these were Master Edward Wingfield, the colony's first President; "worthy and religious" Captain Bartholomew Gosnold; Captain Gabriel Archer, the ready writer, who, says Wingfield, "glorieth much in his pennworke," and whose "True Relation" is another illuminating contribution to the settlement story; Harrington, Throckmorton, Pennington and Waller. Some, like Captain John Martin, whose patent for the plantation of "Brandon," later to become widely known as the historic Harrison seat, is still in existence, were sons of prominent Londoners; but of a larger number we have only names.

The embarking of so large a proportion of "gentlemen" upon an undertaking which called for the severest manual labor has caused many hard things to be said about the colony. Captain Smith—who was a bundle of energy and enterprise, with no tolerance for men less hardy than himself—was their first and harshest critic.

True, it was to search for gold, not to cut down trees and prepare the soil for crops, that most of these "gentle-

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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men" came adventuring to Jamestown. Dreams of vast quantities of the precious ore had come true in countries further south, and they hoped to see them come true in Virginia. Yet when the need arose, they did their part with the axe and the hoe, as well as in exploring the country for food supplies and defending the colony against the Indians. Of the very beginning of the Jamestown settlement it is written:

"Now falleth every man to worke, the Councell contrive the Fort, the rest cut down trees to make place to pitch their Tents; some provide clappbord to relade the ships, some make gardens, some nets."

In the year following, as soon as the "Supply" arrived, Captain Smith, who was then the President, took a party of thirty of them down the river to learn to make clappboard, cut down trees, and become hardened to sleeping on the ground. Among those he chose were Gabriel Beadles and John Russell, described as "the only two gallants of this last Supply, and both proper gentlemen." The quaint chronicler adds:

"Strange were these pleasures to their conditions; yet lodging, eating and drinking, working or playing, they were but doing as the President did himselfe. All these things were carried so pleasantly as within a weeke they became Masters: making their delight to heare the trees thunder as they fell; but the Axes so oft blistered their tender fingers that many times every third blow had a loud othe to drowne the echo; for remedie of which sinne, the President devised how to have every man's othes numbered, and at night for every othe to have a cann of water powred downe his sleeve, with which every offender was so washed that a man should scarce heare an othe in a weeke."



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## THE VIRGINIA PEOPLE

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It was after nearly five months of discomfort and mishaps at sea that, on that memorable 13th of May, 1607, the *Susan Constant*, the *Godspeed*, and the *Discovery* were moored to the trees in six fathom water before what was soon to be Jamestown. Any one who now visits James River in the month of May, when the temperature is balmy and the wooded banks newly dressed with green and garlanded with bloom, may readily imagine the delight of the sea-weary voyagers with the situation. A few days after the landing "Master Percy," walking with several others in the woods, found "the ground all flowing over with faire flowers of sundry colours and kindes, as though it had beene in any Garden or Orchard in England," and with "Strawberries and other fruits unknowne." Walking on through "this Paradise," they came to an Indian village where they were given berries to eat and shown "a Garden of Tobacco and other fruits and herbes," and one of the Indians hospitably gathered some of the tobacco and distributed it among them.

By June 15 the triangular shaped fort, with its bulwarks mounted with artillery at each corner, was finished, and most of their corn was planted. Thus fortified—as they supposed—against the Indians and hunger, Percy complacently remarks:

"This is a fruitful soil, bearing many goodly and fruitful trees."

But conditions were not so favorable as they seemed, and soon enough this enthusiastic sounder of Virginia's praise was to tune his pipe to a different key. On June 22 Captain Christopher Newport, admiral of the little fleet that brought the settlers over, sailed for England, "leaving us," says Percy, "one hundred and foure persons verie bare and scantie of victualls; furthermore, in warres and in danger of the Savages."

With the departure of the ship on whose stores they had depended "there remained neither tavern, beere house, nor place of reliefe, but the common Kettell," which—equally distributed—provided "halfe a pint of wheat, and as much barley boyled with water for a man a day."

Says Thomas Studley, another of the "gentlemen" whose observations had been preserved by Captain Smith: "Had we beene as free from all sinnes as gluttony and drunkennesse, we might have beene canonized for Saints. . . . Our drinke was water, our lodgings Castles in the ayre."

And so, for all the fairness and fruitfulness of the country, there was no bread, and they soon found that with water all around there was not a drop that was fit to drink. As the spring mildness gave way to fierce summer heat to which their bodies were not "seasoned," they were to make another discovery. All unseen, there lurked in that "paradise" a foe more deadly than the Indians were soon to prove. Not only were there trees and fruits "unknowne" to the English emigrant, in the neighborhood of Jamestown, but, invisible and undreamed of, millions of malaria germs flourished in the undrained swamps—and there was no quinine and little medicine of any kind.

Dysentery laid them low. The grim twins, Ague and Fever, fell upon them, setting their teeth chattering, their limbs quaking with cold, then burning and parching their flesh with maddening heat and racking their bones with aching, and finally leaving them weak of body and will, dispirited and miserable and without nourishment or restoratives. The kind physician, Dr. Thomas Wotton, and the godly minister, Reverend Robert Hunt, did all in their power to relieve and comfort them, but their huts—

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## THE VIRGINIA PEOPLE

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hastily put up of green timber thatched with reeds from the swamps—became houses of torture and of death.

“God (being angry with us),” says Captain Smith, “plagued us with such famine and sicknes that the living were scarce able to bury the dead.”

Under such conditions contentment would have been impossible among any set of men in any part of the world, and, though the naïve humor with which even the most dismal of their accounts is spiced indicates that the colonists were well supplied with that wholesome preservative, mutiny and discord were rife. They berated the authorities in London for sending them out so poorly provided, they berated President Wingfield and the Council, they berated each other.

The sturdy Smith himself “tasted the extremity of the Country’s sickness,” but he seems to have had unusual recuperative powers, for he was soon up and doing again and chiding his enfeebled and half-starved companions for their idleness. Of course building and planting were neglected, but the chroniclers, though sufferers themselves, had not yet fully enough realized the debilitating effects of malaria to make due allowance, and the colonists had little sympathy from them or the “adventurers” at home who, in return for what they had spent in fitting them out, were anxiously awaiting a share in the products of so fruitful a region as Virginia was reported to be. The wonder to-day is that all effort was not abandoned and that the infant colony should have, even feebly, held on to life.

Toward the end of the summer Master George Percy, the late enthusiastic stroller through a “paradise,” entered in his note-book this pathetically eloquent necrology:

“The sixt of August there died *John Ashbie*, of the bloudie Flixie.

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COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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“ The ninth day died *George Flowre*, of the swelling.

“ The tenth day died *William Bruster*, Gentleman, of a wound given by the Savages, and was buried the eleventh day.

“ The fourteenth day *Jerome Alicoock*, Ancient [Ensign], died of a wound. The same day *Francis Midwinter* and *Edward Moris*, Corporall, died suddenly.

“ The fifteenth day there died *Edward Browne* and *Stephen Galthorpe*.

“ The sixteenth day there died *Thomas Gower*, Gentleman.

“ The seventeenth day there died *Thomas Mounslie*.

“ The eighteenth day there died *Robert Pennington* and *John Martine*, Gentlemen.

“ The nineteenth day died *Drue Piggase*, Gentleman.

“ The two and twentieth day of August there died *Captaine Bartholomew Gosnold*, one of our Councill: he was honourably buried, having all the Ordnance in the Fort shot off, with many vollies of small shot.

“ The foure and twentieth day died *Edward Harrington* and *George Walker*; and were buried the same day.

“ The sixe and twentieth day died *Kenelme Throgmortine*.

“ The seven and twentieth day died *William Roods*.

“ The eight and twentieth day died *Thomas Stoodie*, Cape Merchant.

“ The fourth day of September died *Thomas Jacob*, Sergeant.

“ The fifth day there died *Benjamin Beast*.

“ Our men were destroyed with cruell diseases . . . and by warres, and some departed suddenly: but for the most part they died of meere famine.”

Master Percy adds: “ There were never Englishmen



CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH AND OPECANCANOUGH



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## THE VIRGINIA PEOPLE

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left in a forreigne Countrey in such miserie as wee were in this new discovered Virginia. Wee watched every three nights, lying on the bare cold ground what weather soever came; warded all the next day: which brought our men to be most feeble wretches. Our food was but a small Can of Barlie sod in water to five men a day. Our drinke, cold water taken out of the River which was at a floud verie salt; at a low tide full of slime and filth."

The sick and dying men "night and day groaning in every corner of the fort" were "most pitifull to heare." Sometimes, continues the ghastly record, those "departing out of the World" were as many as "three or foure in a night," and in the morning their bodies were "trailed out of their Cabines like Dogges, to be buried."

"From May to September," says Studley, "those that escaped lived upon Sea-crabs and Sturgeon. Fifty in this time we buried."

Ere long their pitiful store of provision was "all spent," and the sturgeon season was over. Even the Indians who they hourly expected to destroy them in their weakness, seem to have been touched by their "desperate extremitie," for it is written that God "so changed the harts of the savages that they brought such plenty of their fruits and provision as no man wanted."

With the aid of these unexpected supplies and doubtless helped also by the passing of summer with its burning suns, the remnant of the original one hundred and five colonists seems to have secured a firmer grip on life. Captain Smith, who was given control of affairs, set some of them "to mow, others to bind thatch, some to build houses, others to thatch them."

Going off in "the shallop" on a search for food, he succeeded in securing a helpful supply of game and corn

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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from the Indians, in return for beads, hatchets and "such toys," and established a fantastic sort of trade with Powhatan, which in spite of the fact that the wily old "emperor" never ceased to view the dauntless White Chief with suspicion, nor to plot his destruction, kept the colony from actual starvation until the arrival of the First Supply from England. Moreover, Smith's reports of the plenty he had seen and the love of Pocahontas for himself and the colony, "so revived their dead spirits . . . as all men's fears was abandoned."

It is significant that chroniclers who found Virginia in spring a paradise are silent as to the beauties of autumn. There was no enthusiasm left with which to chant the praise of the sunset-colored woods, the golden sunshine, the softening, veil-like mists of Indian summer.

In the spring of 1607 the change from sea to shore had made Mother Earth doubly charming, but in the mid-winter following it was the first glimpse of the white wings of Captain Newport's returning ship that enraptured their longing eyes. Enfeebled as they were, we may be sure they found voices that made the woods ring with shouts of, *A sail! Newport! England has not forgotten us! We are saved! Glory to God! Long live the king!*

One hundred and twenty men, "well furnished with all things that could be imagined necessary," both for themselves and the first settlers, landed on January 14, 1608. But the joy they brought was shortlived, for three days later, during freezing weather, Jamestown was destroyed by fire. Buildings, arms and ammunition, bedding, clothing and much of the provision went up together in smoke. Their houses had been rough and comfortless, but had, at least, afforded shelter: the church was barn-like and rickety, but it had served to remind them that God was still in



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## THE VIRGINIA PEOPLE

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heaven, and in it they had daily said the prayers they had learned in England. Say Thomas Studley and Anas Todkill, contributors to Smith's "Historie":

"Good Master Hunt, our Preacher, lost all his Library and all he had but the cloathes on his backe; yet none never heard him repine at his losse."

And so the First Supply meant only over a hundred more stomachs to fill, and according to Studley and Todkill, they were again reduced to meal and water, "whereby, with the extremitie of the bitter cold frost, more than halfe of us dyed."

An outbreak of the gold fever caused necessary work to be neglected and added to the general distress. Captain Newport was infected and lingered at Jamestown to freight his ship with a "gilded dirt" believed to contain the coveted metal. The practical Smith, knowing that England would expect to see the ship return laden with valuable products, wished to load her with cedar timber, for he said he was "not enamored of their dirty skill," but the "gilded refiners with their golden promises made all men their slaves," and there was "no talke, no hope, no worke, but dig gold, wash gold, refine gold."

Captain Smith had his way, and the ship was loaded with timber, but later he too seems to have had a touch of the gold fever. From June 2 to July 20, 1608, he, with a party consisting of seven soldiers and seven "gentlemen"—including a physician—were absent from Jamestown on a voyage of discovery and trading for food supplies. They went in an open barge with a sail which they repaired with their shirts when it had been badly damaged in a storm. They explored Chesapeake Bay and the Potomac River, "searching every inlet and bay fit for harbors and habitations"; "*digging and searching for gold*";

parleying, trading or skirmishing with the Indians; fishing—for want of nets—with a frying-pan, but finding it, as they artlessly declare, “a bad instrument to catch fish with.”

They returned to the settlement on July 21 with the thrilling news that they had discovered a gold mine and that the Chesapeake “stretched into the South Sea, or somewhat neare it.” They found the new Supply “all sicke,” while the remnant of the earlier settlers were “some lame, some bruised, all unable to do anything but complain” of Ratcliffe—the new President—who they charged had “riotously consumed” more than his share of the provisions and, by setting them to work on “an unnecessary building for his pleasure in the woods, had brought them to all that misery.”

Captain Smith put Scrivenor at the head of affairs, distributed the provisions Ratcliffe had appropriated, and set out with six gentlemen and six soldiers to make further discoveries. Seven of this party were of the “last Supply,” and not being “seasoned to the country,” were soon “sicke almost to death,” but the only one that died was “Mr. Fetherstone,” who had “behaved himselfe honestly, valiantly and industriously.” They buried him “with a volley of shot,” in a little bay to which they gave his name.

It was the custom of these Englishmen, exploring a wilderness in an open boat, three thousand miles from civilization, or the influence of woman, “daily to have Prayer with a Psalm, at which solemnitie,” we are informed, “the poore Salvages much wondred.”

Returning to Jamestown on September 7 they found Master Scrivenor and divers others whom they had left “exceeding sicke” with yellow fever, “well recovered.” But they also found “many dead; some sicke.”



A LONDON STREET IN 1638



A FARM HOUSE

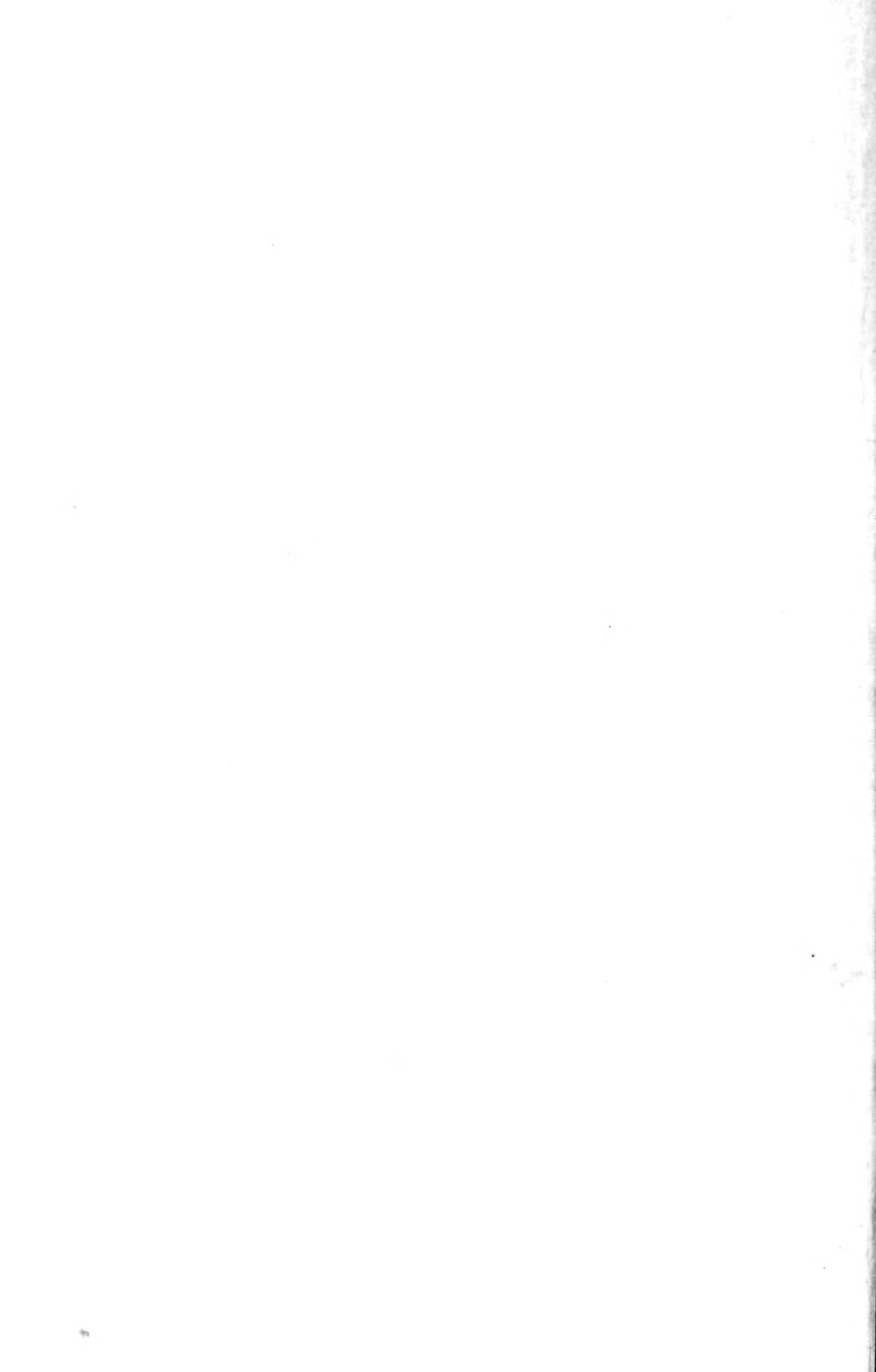


A COTTAGE



A VILLAGE

Typical English Homes of many Virginia Emigrants



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## THE VIRGINIA PEOPLE

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Captain Smith resumed the presidency and set about getting things at Jamestown into shape. The building of Ratcliffe's "pallace" was stayed as "a thing needlesse." the church was repaired and the storehouse re-roofed, and buildings made ready for supplies expected from England. The "order of the watch" was renewed, and the whole company drilled every Saturday in a field near the fort, "where sometimes more than an hundred Salvages would stand in amazement to behold" the soldiers batter a tree on which a target had been placed.

The boats, "trimmed for trade," and sent out with Percy in command, met Captain Newport's ship bringing the Second Supply. This added to the colony seventy persons, including the first two Englishwomen who had seen Virginia—Mrs. Forrest and her maid, Ann Burras. There came also Captain Ralph Waldo and Captain Peter Wynne, "two ancient soldiers and valiant gentlemen," to be added to the Council, "sundry skilful workmen from foreign parts," and "many honest, wise, painful men of every trade and profession."

But, alas, they brought little in the way of provision. In a letter to the Treasurer and Council of Virginia in London, entrusted to Newport on his return trip, Captain Smith complained of the inadequate amount of food furnished the colony and the large number of men sent out to consume it. He describes the colonists as "the one halfe sicke, the other little better," and says, "our dyet is of a little meale and water, and not sufficient of that." He begs that next time they will "send but thirty carpenters, husbandmen, gardeners, fishermen, blacksmiths, masons, and diggers up of tree roots," rather than a thousand such as they have, and to send them well provided. "For except wee be able both to lodge them and feed them

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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they will die for want of the necessities of life before they can be made good for anything.”

He also protests against the expectation of profit out of Virginia so soon—reminding them that the colonists are “but a many of ignorant, miserable soules, that are scarce able to get necessaries to live, and defend themselves against the inconstant Salvages.”

Captain Newport sailed for England again—carrying Smith’s letter—in December, 1608. Soon after his departure the colonists witnessed the first English wedding on Virginia soil. The bride was Ann Burras and the bridegroom was John Laydon, a laborer, and one of the first settlers. Humble folk they were, but though we have no details of the wedding we may be sure that Jamestown made as merry over it as was possible under the circumstances, and that when good Master Hunt spoke the solemn words that meant the founding of the first English family in the first English colony in America they fell on the ears of his hearers with due significance.

Doubtless Mistress Forrest dressed the bride, acted as her matron of honor and gave her away, and doubtless too, she was godmother to little Virginia Laydon, the colony’s first baby, born to John and Ann in the following autumn.

The colony was now in the middle of its second winter. Realization that notwithstanding the losses by death, there were, with the last Supply, two hundred persons to keep soul and body together on the pitiful provision so “af-frighted” them with the prospect of famine that Captain Smith and others bestirred themselves more diligently than ever to find food. This was growing more and more difficult, for the Indians frequently either refused to trade or demanded swords and “sticks that speak,” as they called

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## THE VIRGINIA PEOPLE

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muskets, in return for their corn, and of course these were denied them. In their bargaining, all the shrewdness of a Smith was required to match the shrewdness of a Powhatan or Opecanough, and the hardships that were endured to obtain a few bushels of corn or a few pounds of deer suet are past description.

In December, with the ground covered with snow, their "quarter" was the open woods.

"The snow we digged away and made a great fire in the place; when the ground was well dryed we turned away the fire, and covering the place with a mat there lay very warme."

At Werowocomico—Powhatan's seat on York River—the barge went aground in half frozen shoals, "a flight shot from shore," and, led by Smith, they waded "neere middle deepe" ashore, through muddy icy ooze. They "wrangled" ten quarters (eighty bushels) of corn out of Powhatan for a copper kettle which had struck his fancy, but as it was plain that he was "bursting with desire to have Captain Smith's head," and Pocahontas came "in that darke night through the irksome woods" to inform her English friends of a plot to send them a fine supper and then murder them while they ate it, they spent the night "vigilantly" until it was high water and took their departure.

At Pamunkey, Opecanough, after entertaining them with "feasting and much mirth," plotted to kill them, but Captain Smith, with a mixture of tact, bluff, and daring, saved their lives. He snatched the dread Opecanough by the scalp-lock and pressing his pistol against his breast assured him that if his subjects did not keep their promises to load the barge with provisions, he would load her with their "dead carcasses," but if they would trade as friends he would not hurt them.

“ Upon this, away went their Bowes and Arrowes, and men, women and children brought in their Commodities. . . . and whatsoever he gave them they seemed therewith well contented.”

Yet there are some bright spots in the story. In the Indian town of Kecoughtan—the site of the present Hampton—a week of “ extreme winde, rayne, frost and snow ” caused the explorers to keep that Christmas of 1608 among the Indians and they “ were never more merry, nor fed on more plentie of good Oysters, Fish, flesh, Wild-foule, and good bread; nor never had better fires in England, than in the dry, smoaky houses of Kecoughtan.”

Upon his return to Jamestown Captain Smith gave the colonists a plain talk as to the necessity of the greatest industry if they would live, and laid down the law that “ he that will not work shall not eat,” unless disabled by illness.

And now, runs the record, they so quietly followed their business that in three months' time they made some tar, pitch and soap ashes, produced “ a trial of glass,” made a well in the fort “ of excellent sweet water,” built about twenty houses, re-roofed the church, made fishing-nets and weirs, built a blockhouse in the “ neck ” of the island guarded by a garrison, “ to entertaine the Salvages trade,” and “ digged and planted ” thirty or forty acres of land. They had now sixty-odd pigs and nearly five hundred chickens which “ brought up themselves without having any meat given them.”

In the midst of this lull in their hardships an examination of their supply of corn showed that it was “ halfe rotten,” and the rest being consumed by “ thousands of rats,” the first of which were emigrants from England.

“ This did drive us all to our wits' end.” and “ occasioned the end of all our worke, it being worke sufficient to provide victuall.”



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## THE VIRGINIA PEOPLE

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A party of "60 or 80" was sent down the river to live upon oysters, and twenty to Point Comfort to try fishing. Twenty more were sent to the falls, but nothing could be found there but a few acorns, which were equally divided among the men. They had for a time "more sturgeon than could be devoured by dog and man," some of which they dried and pounded and used for making bread.

There were murmurings against Captain Smith and threats to abandon the country which he answered by promising all runaways the gallows, reminding them that he had never had more from the "store" than the worst of them. He declared that he would divide what was left of the English provisions among the sick and that the well must gather for themselves "the fruits the earth doth yield."

"He that gathereth not every day as much as I doe," said he, "the next day shall be set beyond the river and be banished from the Fort as a drone, till he amend his conditions or starve."

"This order many murmured was very cruell," but it "caused the most part to so well bestirre themselves" that only seven of the two hundred colonists died in that winter and spring of 1608, "except they were drowned."

They had some help from the Indians, especially the "honest, proper, good, promise-keeping king of the Mangoags," who sent Captain Smith "many presents to pray his God for raine or his corne would perish, for his Gods were angry."

Living thus, literally from hand to mouth, the colonists got through the slow, difficult months, until midsummer—when temporary relief came from an unexpected quarter. In May, Captain Samuel Argall had been sent from Eng-

land to find a safer passage to Virginia and make trial of the fishing in Chesapeake Bay and James River. On July 23, in the midst of the sickly season when endurance had been strained to the utmost, the eyes of the hapless band at Jamestown were rejoiced with the sight of his sails.

“ God having seene our misery sufficient, sent in Capitaine Argall to fish for Sturgeon, with a ship well furnished with wine and bisket; which though it was not sent us, such were our occasions we tooke it.”

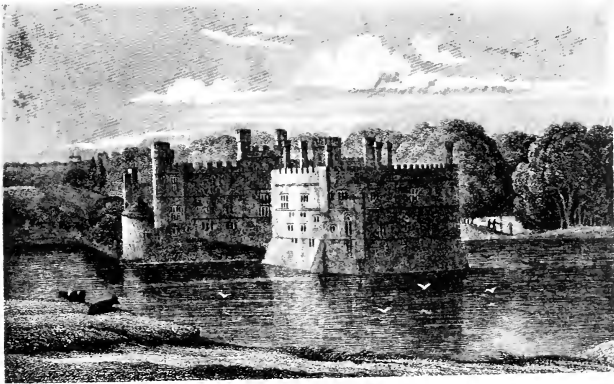
Captain Argall also brought the news of the commission to Lord Delaware as Governor of Virginia, with Sir Thomas Gates as his Lieutenant, Sir George Somers as Admiral General, Captain Newport as Vice Admiral, and a “ great supply ” in preparation for Virginia.

This supply—by far the largest that had been sent out—sailed from England on June 18, 1609. There was a fleet of nine ships carrying five hundred persons—men, women, and children. They sailed by way of the Canary Islands, and while under the tropic suns both yellow fever and the equally deadly London plague made their appearance among the passengers. Many died and were buried at sea. About the first of August, while crossing the Gulf Stream near the Bahamas, a small vessel was lost, with all on board, and the admiral ship, with Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Somers, and Captain Newport aboard, was caught in a hurricane and cast away on the Bermudas. The wreck of this ship, *The Sea Venture*, is believed to have given Shakespeare the theme for his great drama, “ The Tempest.”

The remaining seven ships arrived at Jamestown, in a “ miserable estate,” late in August. Some of them had lost their masts, some had their sails blown from their yards, and much provision had been spoiled by the seas washing over their decks.



Chilham Castle, Kent—Digges



Leeds Castle, Kent—Lord Fairfax

ANCESTRAL HOMES OF SOME VIRGINIA FAMILIES



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## THE VIRGINIA PEOPLE

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Among the newcomers were "divers Gentlemen of good meanes and great parentage," and also "unruly gallants packed thither by their friends to escape ill destinies." More unwelcome than these were the diseases with which many of the passengers were infected and which they added to the sufficiently formidable "country's sickness."

Early in October Captain Smith, who had been painfully burned in a powder explosion, decided to go to England for treatment of his wounds, and Master George Percy succeeded him as President. In the "Historie" we have an account of conditions in the colony when Smith left it. According to this there were four hundred and ninety "and odd" persons—including of course the passengers in the seven ships. Jamestown was strongly palisaded and there were some fifty or sixty houses there and five or six other forts or plantations. The harvest was newly gathered, with the result that there was ten weeks' provision in the store. There were five or six hundred hogs and about as many hens and chickens, "some" goats, "some" sheep, six mares and a horse; and they had fishing nets, and tools for all kinds of work.

The list of arms and armor for defence against the Indians is especially interesting. There were twenty-four pieces of artillery, three hundred muskets, "snapchances and firelocks"—primitive guns, a sufficient supply of powder and shot and more pikes, swords, cuirasses and morions—open face helmets—than there were men to use them.

There were a hundred "well trained and expert soldiers" to whom "the language and habitations" of the Indians were known, one carpenter, and three "learners," two blacksmiths, two sailors, and a number of laborers.

The rest of the men are described as "poore gentlemen, tradesmen, serving-men, libertines and such like, ten times more fit to spoyle a commonwealth than either begin or help to maintaine one." But the chronicler more graciously adds, "Notwithstanding, I confesse divers amongst them had better mindes and grew much more industrious than was expected."

Hard upon Smith's departure followed the "Starving Time," and the earlier hardships of the colonists faded into insignificance. The increased population soon devoured the increased provision. Ague and fever proved as debilitating to the laborers with the last supply as they had to the "gentlemen" with the first two, and, as has been said, yellow fever and the "plague" had been added to the "country's diseases." The Indians, finding that the dreaded Captain Smith had left, robbed and murdered them and instead of corn and other provisions dealt them "mortal wounds with clubs and arrows." Of the whole population of about five hundred, there remained within six months "not past sixty men, women and children, most miserable and poore creatures, and those were preserved for the most part by roots, herbes, acornes, walnuts, berries and now and then a little fish." There was not a hog or fowl left and they had even eaten the horses.<sup>1</sup>

Historians have doubted the assertions that there was cannibalism at Jamestown at this frightful time. True or not, statements that there was are certainly to be found in contemporary records. One of these incorporated into Smith's "Historie" tells us:

"So great was our famine that a Savage we slew and buried, the poorer sort tooke him up againe and eat him, and so did divers one another boyled and stewed with roots

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<sup>1</sup> Strachey and Smith both testify to this.

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## THE VIRGINIA PEOPLE

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and herbs: And one amongst the rest did kill his wife, powdered [salted] her, and had eaten part of her before it was knowne, for which hee was executed, as hee well deserved; now whether shee was better roasted, boyled or carbonado'd, I know not, but of such a dish as powdered wife I never heard."

The same witness adds that what the settlers endured at this time was "too vile to say," and declares that all would have perished within ten days more had not relief come to them.

"But God that would not this Countrie should be unplanted, sent Sir Thomas Gates and Sir George Somers with one hundred and fiftie people most happily preserved by the Bermudas to preserve us."

The "two noble knights" were so appalled at the conditions they found at Jamestown that they decided there was nothing to do but abandon it, and taking what were left of the half-starved colonists aboard the ship they had managed to build during their nine months' sojourn in the Bermudas, but refusing to burn the town as many wished them to do, set sail for England.

But "God would not have it so."

Early next morning, before they were out of James River, they met Lord Delaware, coming as governor of the colony, with three ships "exceedingly well furnished with all necessaries fitting," and bringing with him Sir Ferdinando Wainman and "divers other gentlemen of sort."

With this fleet they returned to deserted Jamestown. This was on Sunday, June 10, 1610. All went ashore and heard a sermon by Parson Bucke, after which his Lordship read his commission as governor and "entered into a consultation for the good of the colony." And the chronicler piously observes, "Never had any people

more just cause to cast themselves at the very foot-stoole of God, and to reverence his mercie."

Heartened by the provisions his Lordship brought, their hope of success renewed, all fell to work at the tasks allotted them and "every man endeavoureth to outstrip the other in diligence."

Jamestown was now three years old. There were in the fort, in addition to the dwelling houses, a market-place, a storehouse, a "corps-du-guarde" and a church—its best building. The fort was built in the shape of a triangle with its widest side facing the river and a row of houses running along each of the other two sides within the heavy plank palisades. The houses were exceedingly primitive, of course, but their large "country chimneys" and the abundance of wood made possible the cheerful log-fires dear to the Englishman's heart.

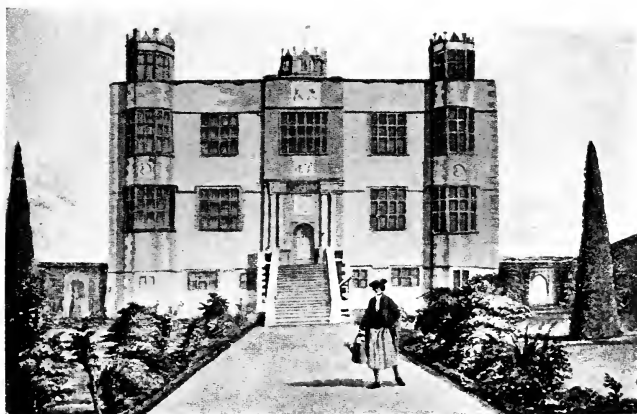
The church was sixty feet long and twenty-four feet wide and had a chancel of cedar and a communion-table of black walnut. "All the pews and the pulpit were of cedar, with fair broad windows, also of cedar, to shut and open as the weather shall occasion." The font was "hewen hollow like a canoe," and there were two bells in the steeple. "Every morning, at the ringing of the bell, about ten o'clock, each man addressed himself to prayers, and so at four of the clock, before supper."<sup>2</sup>

It is in connection with this little house of worship that we have the first suggestion of ceremonious manners in Virginia. Lord Delaware had it put in good repair and "kept passing sweet and trimmed up with divers flowers," and "Every Sunday when the Lord Governor went to Church he was accompanied with all the Councillors, Captains, other Officers, and all the Gentlemen, with a guard

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<sup>2</sup> Strachey.





From "A Quaker Post-Bag." Courtesy of Longmans, Green & Co.  
Barlborough Hall, Derbyshire—Rodes, Baronets



From "The Manor Houses of England." Courtesy of Chas. Scribner's Sons  
Okewell Hall, Yorkshire—Batte

ANCESTRAL HOMES OF SOME VIRGINIA FAMILIES



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## THE VIRGINIA PEOPLE

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of fifty Halberdiers in his Lordship's Livery, fair red cloaks, on each side and behind him. The Lord Governor sat in the choir, in a green velvet chair, with a velvet cushion before him on which he knelt, and the council, captains, and officers sat on each side of him, each in their place, and when the Lord Governor returned home, he was waited on in the same manner to his house."<sup>3</sup>

Lord Delaware followed the fashion of blaming the colonists for their misfortunes. In an address soon after his arrival he charged them with "haughtie vanities and sluggish idlenesse," and in his report to the Virginia Company in England, dated July 7, 1610, describes them as "a hundred or two debauched hands . . . ill provided when they come and worse governed when they are here. Men of distempered bodies and infected minds." However, he was already becoming acquainted with the real cause of their condition, for in the same letter he speaks of the "sickness of the country," with which a hundred and fifty of his men had been afflicted at one time, and he is persuaded he would have lost most of them had he not brought with him good Dr. Bohun and a store of medicines which were already nearly exhausted.<sup>4</sup>

The Lord Governor was soon to learn by bitter experience the effects upon the energies of malaria and other ailments with which the colonists were only too familiar, for, after nine months' residence at Jamestown, continued ill-health drove him back to England. In a letter of apology for deserting his post, he says that he was "welcomed to Jamestowne by a violent ague," and that three weeks after he was cured of that he "began to be dis-

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<sup>3</sup> Strachey.

<sup>4</sup> Strachey, "History of the Travaile into Virginia Britania," Hakluyt Society, p. xxxii.

tempered with other grievous sicknesses which successively and severally " assailed him. Then ague and fever seized him again with much more violence than before and held him for more than a month, bringing him to " greater weakness." He was soon to be brought to a still more miserable condition, for says he:

" The flux surprised mee, and kept me many daies, then the crampe assaulted my weake body with stronge paines, and after that the gout."

Finally, scurvy reduced him to such a state that he was " ready to leave the world," but preferring a " hopefull recoverie " to an " assured ruine," and lacking " both food and Physicke fit to remedie such extraordinary diseases, on March 28, 1611, he " shipped " himself back to England, taking along to attend him Dr. Bohun.

He says he left in Virginia " about two hundred "—all that were left alive of some nine hundred and twenty-five who had come out in the three years. He left the colony in charge of " Captaine George Piercie, a Gentleman of honour and resolution," who was to act as governor until the coming of Sir Thomas Dale.

The able Sir Thomas and his fleet of three ships with men and cattle, " and all other provisions necessarie for a yeare," entered Virginia waters on the tenth of May. At Jamestown he found " most of the companie at their daily and usuall works, bowling in the streets; these he employed about necessarie workes."

About the first of August there arrived, " to second this noble knight," Sir Thomas Gates with a fleet of " six tall ships," bringing three hundred persons—twenty of whom were women, and among them Lady Gates and her daughters—a hundred cattle, and " all manner of provision that could be thought needfull."

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## THE VIRGINIA PEOPLE

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As a disciplinarian Sir Thomas Dale was a past master. The martial laws he established at Jamestown were severe in the extreme, but he made some wholesome improvements. The colony had been managed from the beginning on the community plan—all sharing the work and such provisions as were at command. Dale at once allotted all of the settlers private gardens, in addition to the public ones, and in 1613 gave each man three acres of cleared ground to farm for himself and his family, and we are informed that when they were “fed out of the common store and laboured jointly together, glad was he that could slip from his labour, or slumber over his taske, he cared not how, nay the most honest among them would hardly take so much paines in a weeke as now for themselves they will doe in a day.”

There was now a steady inflow of emigrants to Virginia, in smaller numbers. Englishmen may be said to have secured a fairly firm foothold in the Red Man's land and, in spite of continued high mortality, there was no longer any doubt of the continuance of the colony. Little settlements gradually extended along the river from Point Comfort and Newport's News to the present site of Richmond. Governor Dale established a new town at Henrico on the Dutch Gap peninsula, and a hospital called “Mount Malady” was built nearby. Though from 1611 to 1613 there were frequent contests with the Indians, the use of armor by the Englishmen made their arrows almost harmless. The marriage of Pocahontas with John Rolfe, in April, 1613, was followed by a peace with Powhatan and his people, and says Rolfe:

“The great blessings of God have followed this peace and it, next under Him, hath bredd our plentie—everie man sitting under his fig-tree in safety, gathering and reaping the fruits of their labors with much joy and comfort.”

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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Iron works were established at Falling Creek and the manufacture of salt and glass, and experiments in vine-growing and silk-making begun. Encouraged by the happier conditions, the colonists actually undertook enterprises outside of Virginia, such as the sending of Captain Argall, in 1614, to break up the French settlement on the coast of Maine, which saved New England for the English.

In 1619 the cultivation of tobacco was begun, and in the same year came the Virginia Company's best gift to the colony—the right to have its own legislature. Any one who reads the journal of this assembly's first session must see that the representatives were independent, sturdy Englishmen, honestly endeavoring to serve the people. Early in 1622 justice was more fully brought home to the people by the establishment of local courts in various parts of the colony.

Plans had been formed and a beginning made for the establishment of a school at Charles City—now City Point—and a college at Henrico.

Upon this scene of fair promise suddenly fell the frightful Indian Massacre of 1622, when about four hundred of the twelve hundred and forty English then living in Virginia were murdered. There was a temporary panic, but the Virginians soon dauntlessly expressed the belief that the colony would rise from its depressed condition to greater things than it had yet attained to, and the Company in London replied that "this addition of Price had endeared the Purchase and that the Blood of those People would be the Seed of the Plantation."

After the first year or two a much larger proportion of laborers and mechanics was brought over. Those that came with Sir Thomas Dale were described as "honest and

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## THE VIRGINIA PEOPLE

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industrious men, carpenters, smiths, coopers, fishermen, tanners, shoemakers, shipwrights, brickmen, gardeners, husbandmen and laboring men of all sorts." Yet they stood the diseases of the locality no better than those of the less hardy class. According to John Rolfe's count, there were, in 1616, only three hundred and fifty people in Virginia. The historian, Alexander Brown, has made a calculation showing that between November, 1619, and February, 1625, forty-four hundred persons died or were murdered by the Indians.

Gentlemen and laborers alike, the vast majority of the earliest emigrants to Virginia died untimely deaths, leaving in the land of their adoption only nameless graves upon graves of which to-day we have no trace.

They are less than shadows—represented only by groups of colorless figures. Yet we know that those figures stand for human beings like to ourselves save for the excess of hardship that was their portion. As we ponder over them, they seem to take on flesh and to plead for interest and sympathy.

They blazed the way. They were the forerunners of those who planted a civilized and Christian state in a wilderness. Whatever sins were theirs they blotted out in their own blood. All honor to them—saints or sinners! Amid toil, abuse, want, terror, starvation, disease and death, they held the land—a forlorn hope dying for the sake of those to follow them.

II—THE LATER EMIGRANTS

The Census of 1624-25 forms a good starting point for a study of the classes of emigrants to Virginia, for by that time the colony had assumed, in a rudimentary way, its later form.

The Census shows many names of men long afterward active in colonial affairs. There were then in Virginia six hundred and eight free people, four hundred and fifty-seven white servants, and twenty-three negroes. Of the freemen twenty-five left descendants in well-known families which can be traced to the present day and eight of the servants were ancestors of Virginia families of some standing. There may have been many others, both bond and free, who left descendants that cannot be traced.

Among the freemen referred to were Thomas Savage and John Proctor, who came in 1607; Edward Waters, 1608; John Flood and Thomas Willoughby, 1610; Thomas Harris, Commander of a plantation, 1611; Francis Mason, 1613; Abraham Persey, 1616; William Farrar, John Wilkins and Matthew Edloe, 1618; Thomas Osborne, Commander of a plantation, John Woodson and Thomas Gascoine, 1619; Christopher Branch, 1620; John Utie, John Chew, Anthony Barham, Daniel Gookin, Thomas Purefoy, and John Chisman, 1621; John West, Samuel Mathews and Christopher Calthorpe, and Sir Francis Wyatt and Dr. John Pott, whose brothers founded families.

We have information about the English forefathers of but few of those resident in Virginia at the time of the Census, as in the earlier days. The father and grandfather of Christopher Branch are styled "gentleman," but his great-grandfather was a prosperous mercer of Abingdon. Thomas Baugh was a grandson of Rowland





THOMAS, SIXTH LORD FAIRFAX OF LEEDS CASTLE, ENGLAND,  
AND GREENWAY COURT, VIRGINIA



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Baugh, Esq., of Twining, in Worcestershire. Thomas Pawlett was great-grandson of the first Marquis of Winchester. Sir George Yeardley, who had been an officer in the Low Countries, was the son of a merchant tailor of London; and the father of his fellow-councillor, Ralph Hamor, was another Londoner in the same trade. John Southern, Gent., was of Tichfield, in Hampshire. Elizabeth and Anne Southey were the widow and daughter of Henry Southey, Esq., of Rimpton, Somerset, who had died soon after his arrival in Virginia. John West was a younger son of the second Lord Delaware. Thomas Farley, Gent., was of the city of Worcester, and John Proctor was brother of Thomas Proctor, a wealthy London merchant. Edward Berkeley was the son of John Berkeley, who had been killed by the Indians in 1622, and grandson of Sir John Berkeley, of Beverstone Castle, Gloucestershire. George, Paul, William, and Maurice Thompson were sons of Ralph Thompson, of Walton, Hertfordshire, and Maurice was grandfather of the first Lord Haversham. Christopher Calthorpe was the son of Christopher Calthorpe, Esq., of Blakeney, Norfolk. Nicholas Martian was a Protestant Walloon who had been naturalized in England.

Thomas Spilman was a brother of Captain Henry Spilman who had been killed by the Indians some years before; they were nephews of Sir Henry Spilman. Edward Waters had brothers and sisters living at Great Hornmeade, Hertfordshire, and Middleham, Yorkshire. Adam Thoroughgood was a brother of Sir John Thoroughgood, and his wife, Sarah, was a member of the great London family of Offley and granddaughter of Lord Mayor Sir Edward Osborne. Captain Francis West was another son of the second Lord Delaware, and Captain John Martin the son of Sir Richard Martin, goldsmith, of London.

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Anthony Bonall was probably a Frenchman, as the Virginia Company gave him two shares for his pains in securing certain vine-dressers from Languedoc to go to Virginia. Charles Harmer was a brother of Dr. John Harmer, Greek professor at Oxford, and John Barnabe, a brother of Richard Barnabe, merchant, of London. English connections of a number of others are known.

Of those of whose origin we know nothing the following are termed "gentleman," in contemporary public records: Thomas Hothersall, Raleigh Crashaw, John Barnham, Edward Waters, Pharoah (or Farrar) Flinton, Giles Allington, John Boush, Albino Lupo, Peter and John Arundel, John Chisman, Robert Poole, John Southern, Clement Dilke, Giles Jones, Thomas Willoughby, William Perry, Robert Sweete, John Howe, Thomas Harwood, Elmer Phillips, James Davis, William Spence, Richard Brewster, William Kempe (of Hawes, Leicestershire), William Julian, John Burrows, Edward Grindon, Nathaniel Causey, William Harwood, Peter Strafferton, Richard Kingsmill (whose arms appear on his widow's tomb), Thomas Marloe or Marlott, Thomas Crispe (of Kent), Hugh Crowder, Killibett Hitchcock, John Wilcox, John Utie, John Baynum, Anthony Burrows, William English, and Samuel Sharpe. There may, of course, have been others entitled to the designation "gentleman," whose names do not happen to appear in the scanty records of the time.

Among other men of good standing were various members of the Council such as Captain Roger Smith, who had served twelve years in the wars of the Low Countries; George Sandys, the poet, who was Treasurer of the Colony; William Claiborne, of an ancient family at Cleburne, in Westmoreland; Christopher Davison, son of Queen

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Elizabeth's unfortunate secretary, who had died in 1623, but whose widow was still living in Virginia, and Abraham Persey, perhaps the wealthiest merchant in the colony.

Still another class of prominent men were those who held military commissions, and who in lists and documents are always given their rank. Among these were Lieutenant Thomas Osborne, Ensign Isaac Chaplaine, Captain William Pierce, Captain Nathaniel Bass, Captain Thomas Davis, Captain William Eppes, Captain Thomas Graves, and Ensign Francis Eppes.

It will not do to lay too much stress on the social meaning of the term "mister," but its use always noted a person of respectability. It seems to have been applied alike to gentlemen and prosperous yeomen. It appears before the following names of men living in Virginia about this time: Thomas Swift, William Bentley, Robert Langley, Thomas Allnut, William Atkins, Thomas Hamor (a brother of Ralph), Henry Horne, Anthony Barham, John Smith, Luke and John Boyse, ——— Emerson, John Upton, Edward Cage, Tobias Felgate, Francis Chamberlain, ——— Bagwell, John Bates, and Robert Bennett.

Of these John Upton and John Bates were included in the Census among the servants of Abraham Persey, but there is evidence in contemporary records that they were hired employés. Upton was soon afterward styled "gentleman," and Bates "merchant."

Next to this upper class which we have been describing come the yeomen and mechanics. Among those styled yeoman were Adam Dixon (who had come to Virginia as master caulker of the Company's ships), John Sipsey, afterward prominent in Lower Norfolk; Thomas Sully, William Spencer, John Johnson, Richard Taylor, John Powell, Robert Salford, John Downman, Thomas Bouldin,

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and others. Some of these afterward became members of the House of Burgesses. Among the mechanics were Thomas Passmore, carpenter, and Richard Tree, carpenter, who had come to Virginia as a foreman for Abraham Persey.

Thirty of the freemen named in the Census were, or became, men of sufficient importance to be members of the House of Burgesses, but are otherwise so little known that in most instances we are unable to determine their social standing either in England or in the colony. Of some we know a little. John Powell, yeoman, seems to have had a son of his own name, who was a burgess for Elizabeth City 1666-76; Richard Tree, as has been said, was a carpenter; Thomas Kingston was afterward Surveyor General; Rice Hooe, who appears as having business transactions with Edward Bennett, of London, was ancestor of a family prominent to the present day; Roger Dilke had a son Roger, of Surry County, who was styled "gentleman"; and John Moon, at his death, in 1665, in Isle of Wight County, left a considerable estate in Virginia and lands in Hampshire, England.

We have now given a summary as far as one can be made of social conditions among the freemen living in Virginia in 1625.

Of the four hundred and fifty-seven servants we have information of only about thirty beyond the fact that they *were* servants.

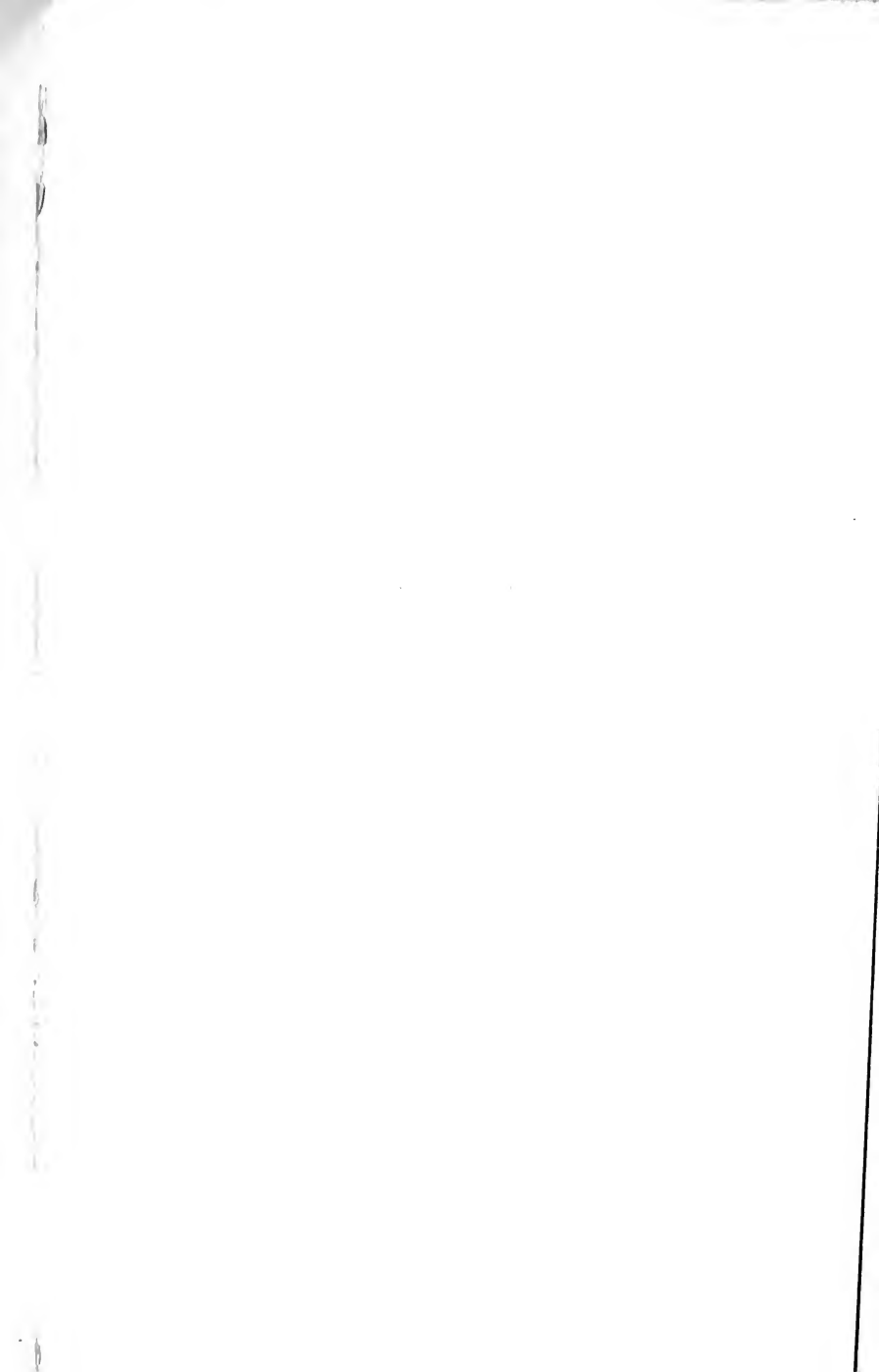
It is evident that some of them were merely technically so classed. For instance, Richard Townsend had come to Virginia when a boy of fifteen, but we know that before long he was apprenticed to Doctor Pott to be taught to be a physician and apothecary. Adam Thoroughgood, who also came at fifteen, had two brothers who were knights—one of them in the household of the Duke of Buckingham—



R. Cooper sculp

SIR THOMAS LUNSFORD

From an unique print in the British Museum





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and it was probably through this powerful influence that some years later he received a grant of 3200 acres "at the espetiall recommendation of him from their Lordships and other of his Majesty's Most Hon'ble privie Councill."

Abraham Wood was brought to Virginia as a child of six and in later years became a Major General of militia, the greatest Indian trader of his time, and a leader in promoting Western exploration.

While no doubt very many of the servants named in this Census were laborers and menials, it is plain that many others were of a different grade from those brought over later. On account of the small amount of land which could be cultivated in Virginia there was not in the early days that intense desire for labor which later caused numerous examples of kidnapping in England and the shipping to the colony of people gathered up in the streets of London.

Among the thirty servants of whom a little is known were Robert Hallam (a brother of William and Thomas Hallam, salters, of Essex and London) who in 1636 obtained a grant of a thousand acres of land and who had a grandson, Samuel Woodward, of Boston, Mass.; John Trussell, who settled in Northumberland County and became a burgess and colonel of militia; Randall Crew—both of whose names appear in the noble English family of Crew—who was a burgess for Upper Norfolk; John Bates, who in 1626 is styled "merchant"; John Upton who in 1626, as "Mr. John Upton," was ordered by the Council to pay Abraham Persey for the eight months he was absent from his service the year after the Massacre and who became a burgess, commander of Isle of Wight and mint-master general; Randall Holt, who married Mary, daughter and heiress of John Bayly, and acquired a large landed estate on Hog Island; Richard Townsend, whose career

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has already been described; John Lightfoot (not ancestor of the later family of the name), who must have been a hired and not an indentured servant, as in a grant of land to him in 1625 he is described as "an ancient planter who came in the time of Sir Thomas Dale"; Abraham Wood, already referred to; David Mansfield or Mansell—described in the Census as "a hired servant"—who became a burgess; Wessell Webling, a son of Nicholas Webling, of London, brewer, whose indentures show that he had contracted to serve Edward Bennett for three years and at the end of that time was to be given a house and fifty acres of land; Thomas Curtis and some other servants of Daniel Gookin, who seem from the records to have made contracts with him before coming to Virginia; Lionel Roulston—both of whose names appear in an old family in the north of England—who, in 1627, was buying and selling land as "gentleman," and who was a burgess; John Hill, of Lower Norfolk, who had been a bookbinder in the University of Oxford; Stephen Webb, afterward burgess for James City, whose father is said in several depositions to have been of Breshley, Worcestershire, and a freeholder of several lands in that manor; William Allen, Anthony Pagett, and Thomas Jordan, who were also burgesses; John Atkins, Thomas Barnett, Thomas Hawkins, Anthony Jones, Francis Fowler, and others.

In later years when, as has been intimated, the demand for laborers in the colony could hardly be met, there were fewer servants who were not menials, but among this class Virginia genealogists have found but two from whom sprung people of any prominence. It is, of course, possible that after becoming free, many servants became small farmers and may have had descendants who rose in the world, but if they did we have no record of it.

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The treatment of the emigrants for the long period between the Census of 1625 and the Revolution must necessarily be more general.

The first subject to be considered is the origin of the higher planting class. One of the most discussed phases of emigration to Virginia has ever been that of the Cavaliers. It should be clearly understood that "Cavalier" means not only a class in society, but also a political party. Any one acquainted with the history of England during the Civil Wars must feel that after the defeat of the King and the numerous fines, confiscations, and sales forced by necessity, large numbers of the Royalists would have wished to leave the country. After the Restoration, when so many of them found their hopes of repaired fortunes disappointed, the reason for their emigration continued. In 1649 there were sixteen thousand people in Virginia, and in 1671 forty thousand, including six thousand servants. During this period, though many servants came, including Scotch and Irish prisoners of the Parliamentary Army, and there was a considerable increase by births, it is evident that there was an unusually large emigration of freemen.

No one was in position to be better informed in regard to the Royalist emigration to Virginia than Clarendon. In the 18th book of his History he says, "Sir William Berkeley, the Governor thereof, who had industriously invited many gentlemen and others thither as a place of security, . . . where they might live plentifully, many persons of condition and good officers in the war had transported themselves with all the estates they had been able to preserve."

Governor Berkeley himself says in his "Discourse and View of Virginia" (1663): "Another great imputation lyes on the Country that none but those of the meanest

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quality and corruptest lives go thither. . . . But this is not all true, for men of as good families as any subjects in England have resided there, as the Perseys, the Barkleys, the Wests, the Gages, the Throgmortons, Wyatts, Digges, Chichleys, Moldsworthis, Morisons, Kemps, and a hundred others, which I forbear to name." There is no doubt that the "imputation" referred to by Berkeley was long prevalent in England. It probably arose, in part, from the exportation of convicts, but chiefly from the infamous system of kidnapping so widely spread there.

While there is abundant proof that many gentlemen of good family settled in the colony, and also many sons and kinsmen of merchants, there is not yet sufficient evidence to authorize positive statements as to the whole planting class. A good deal, however, is known. There was one baron, Fairfax; a son of an earl, Percy; three sons of another baron, Lord Delaware; and the grandson and great-grandson of two others, Henry Willoughby and William Fairfax, whose descendants became Lords Willoughby, of Parham, and Lords Fairfax. Four baronets, Beckwith, Bickley, Peyton, and Skipwith, came to Virginia and left families in which their titles descended, and three families, Bathurst, Booth—from the Dunham Massie line—and Rodes, descended from younger sons of baronets, also settled in Virginia. Several knights, such as Sir Henry Chichley, Sir Thomas Lunsford, Sir Fleetwood Dormer, Sir Dudley Wyatt, and Sir John Zouch, came, not as officials, but as settlers.

Among other emigrants of interesting or historic connection in England were William Bernard, a nephew of Sir John Bernard, who married Shakespeare's granddaughter; George Donne, a son of Doctor John Donne; Henry Finch, brother of Sir John Finch, Speaker of the

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House of Commons; Francis Lovelace, brother of the poet; Nathaniel Littleton, brother of the Lord Keeper, and Francis, Robert, and Richard Moryson, whose sister married the famous Lord Falkland.

A very considerable number of the English gentry, many of whom founded families of their own names while others left descendants through daughters, settled in the colony. As has been said, "gentleman" is a term covering a wide field. Ancestors classed as gentry ranged from ancient and distinguished lines like Brent, Calthorpe, Chamberlayne, Chichester, Clifton, Coke, Digges, Evelyn, Filmer, Isham, Littleton, Ludlow, Mallory, Wyatt, and others of equal note, down through families like Batte and Jenings which rose during later Tudor times, to those whose "gentry" was only a couple of generations old at the time of emigration, and whose fortunes had been founded on the successful exertion of merchant or tradesman, or of some shrewd and thrifty steward of a nobleman's estate.

The Scotch emigration was smaller, but, like the English gentry, represented various grades. Some were descendants of such families as Douglas, of Mains; Spotswood; Home, or Hume, of Wedderburn; Graham, of Wackinston and Killearn; and Wedderburn, while others were of much lower rank.

The families which can be traced to the mercantile class constitute not quite so large a number as those descended from the gentry. Some of them were of great merchant families, like Bennett and Bland, of London, and Cary, of Bristol. Though several of these, and others—like Bolling, Byrd, Metcalfe, and Terrell—trace ultimately to the landed gentry, little is known of the ancestry of many merchants from whom Virginia families descend. As it was a common custom during the reigns of Elizabeth and the early

Stuarts for younger sons of country gentlemen to be apprenticed to trade, many more may have been of the gentry, but there is an equal possibility that they were of humble extraction.

A good number of prominent Virginia families—at least forty—descended from ministers of the Church of England living in Virginia, or from emigrant sons of ministers. In view of the common criticism of the Virginia clergy, it may be well to say here that as far as is known every one of these founders of families was a man of good character. Most of them of whom we have any detailed record were college bred and many had well stocked libraries. Like the other classes, they came of different social grades. Some, like Bagge, Campbell, Foliott, Rose, McRae, Semple, and a number of others, were of gentle blood, while others still came from a lower rank. An influential churchman in England sometimes founded the fortunes of a family in the colony, as did John Robinson, Bishop of London, whose brother Christopher settled in Virginia.

A few families of note traced to physicians, lawyers, army and navy officers, five or six to masters of ships in the Virginia trade, three or four to master weavers or cloth manufacturers, three or four to yeomen, and about the same number to mechanics. Servants who came after 1625 founded, as has been said, two well known Virginia families, and there are traditions that two others descend from indentured servants. One from a law student who was kidnapped and sold into Virginia, and the other from a young Scotchman of good family who, having run away from college and bound himself to the master of a Virginia ship, was sold here to a rich planter and in time became a prominent lawyer and married his former owner's daughter and heiress.



Robert Bolling, of the City of London



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Henry Corbin, of Hall End, Warwickshire

SOME FOUNDERS OF VIRGINIA FAMILIES





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Besides the families of the upper class which have now been treated of, there was a much larger group—among them a number of the most influential in the colony—of whose ancestry over the sea we have absolutely no knowledge. The emigrant members of a good proportion of these are known, and all that are were freemen—many of them, no doubt, sons of gentlemen or merchants. They came to the colony as men of recognized position, had coats-of-arms, and numbers of them soon became members of the House of Burgesses or of the Council. They bore such names as Aston, Ashton, Armistead, Ball, Ballard, Beale, Beverley, Bray, Duke, Eppes, Farrar, Bridger, Browne (of Surry), Carter, Chisman, Churchill, Hill (of "Shirley"), Lee, Parke, Pettus, and others of prominence.

In addition to all of these there was a large number of emigrants of whose ancestral connections we cannot make even a conjecture, and who may have been derived from almost any grade of society in England; but not a single instance of a Virginia family descended from a convict has ever been found by any genealogist. Some convicts may, after the expiration of their term of service, have become small landholders and left descendants, but of such there is no trace.

Larger still than any of the classes of emigrants which have been considered was the great mass of small farmers, yeomen, mechanics, and free laborers who throughout the Colonial period came from English towns and villages, farmhouses, and cottages to Virginia, and who constituted the bulk of the population then, as their descendants did later. This middle class had various grades within itself and later in the period, and after the Revolution, many of its members acquired wealth and position. And let it be emphatically asserted here that neither during the Colonial

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nor the State period was the population of Virginia made up mainly of large landowners and "poor whites." A great majority of our people have always been the respectable, independent middle class.

This discussion has been devoted chiefly to emigrants from England, for the few hundreds of Huguenots who came over were soon merged in the surrounding English population, and the very important Scotch-Irish and German elements came too late to influence colonial manners and customs except in the districts settled by them. Special knowledge and research would be required for the special study which they deserve.

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## II

# HOUSES FROM LOG-CABIN TO MANSION

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**DORLY** provided in many ways as were the first English Americans they found ready for their axes and saws great plenty of goodly timber upon which they at once fell to work, and Virginia pine and cedar trees speedily became roof-trees. The construction of these is left to the imagination, but they were, of course, the crudest and most primitive of shanties. Hastily put together of green plank, they were soon warped and rickety and it is not surprising that when Sir Thomas Dale came out to be governor, in 1611, he should have found them about to fall down on the heads of their owners.

Ere long the flimsy plank hut gave way to the sturdier if equally primitive log-cabin, which deserves to be called the earliest form of colonial architecture, for so much the rule did it become that it was known as the "Virginia house"—as the cloth the busy housewife wove for bed linen and clothing was "Virginia cloth."

This original Colonial Dame was not conscious of anything picturesque about the title which is hers by right, for it had not then become redolent of mansions and minuets. She had a stout heart or she would not have ventured so far from her native hearth-stone; and before Jamestown malaria froze her blood and parched her flesh and fear of the tomahawk haunted her sleeping and waking hours, her cheek was as ruddy and her eye as glancing as cheeks and eyes of wholesome English girls are like to be. She was glad of her dwelling of logs with the bark on, chinked with mud or with clay to keep the weather

out, and roofed with poles or with clapboard, and proud of her chest of drawers and looking-glass, her pewter plates and dishes, her brass kettle, candlesticks and fire-dogs, brought from England, and also of the home-made settle, table, or cricket which supplemented these, and the feather-bed made of feathers plucked from her own geese. There is no doubt that many a worthy burgess and his lady from whom Virginians of to-day are proud to claim descent found peace and content, when the day's work was done, by the crackling fire of such a home.

During these early days, and afterward in the settlements in the western part of the colony, there were scattered about small palisaded forts in which neighboring families took refuge when in danger of Indian attack, and immediately after the Massacre of 1622 the General Assembly ordered that every house be palisaded.

As time went on, the one-room log-cabin developed into the double cabin with two rooms below and loft above and a shed-room kitchen adding to its commodiousness, and sometimes a shingled roof and weather-boarded sides, or even a rude porch, gave it further comfort and sightliness.

Later, when these primitive abodes were supplanted by frame and brick houses with steep roofs and big chimneys like those the colonists remembered in old England the "Virginia house" became and remained the home of the very poor man and the frontiersman. These were more scantily furnished—straw pallets or bear-skins laid before the fire often taking the place of the prized feather-bed, while much more frequent than the brass kettle was the "great iron pot" in which such of the good man's food as was not roasted or baked before the open fire was cooked, and which was a cherished possession—a valued legacy. For instance, in 1756 James McClure, a settler in The Val-



A LOG CABIN



THE ROBERTSON HOUSE, CHESTERFIELD COUNTY. BUILT ABOUT 1750  
Frame dwelling with chimney twenty-five feet wide



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## HOUSES FROM LOG-CABIN TO MANSION

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ley of Virginia, bequeathed to his son James his "Bible and big iron pot," and to his son Samuel his "next biggest pot," and directed that his wife Agnes was "to have the use of both pots."<sup>1</sup>

On the frontier the cabin was often loop-holed for defence against the Indians. If it was adorned and made comfortable with skins of animals, the passer-by guessed that its owner was a hunter. The diary of a Moravian missionary from Pennsylvania who, in 1735, visited the western part of Virginia now occupied by the mountain counties of Bath and Alleghany, tells of lodging in cabins, sleeping on bear-skins in front of the fire, and eating bear's meat which he says was to be found in every house in that part of the colony. He describes the white people of the region as living like the Indians—hunting being the chief occupation of the men and their food "Johnny cakes," deer and bear's meat.<sup>2</sup>

Whether the Virginian's home was the earliest one-room cabin or the fair mansion of a later day, its most invariable characteristic was hospitality. Every good man of a house and every good housewife stood ready to share without apology such accommodations as were at command with the stranger who chanced to come by as freely as with the invited guest. Perchance the unknown was offered a "great bed" with silk curtains and valance, perchance sleeping space on a bear-skin or pallet in the one room occupied by his host, hostess, and a numerous brood; but the spirit of the offering was the same—the cheerful giving of the best the giver possessed—and the spirit of the acceptance was the same.

Colonel William Byrd was a hospitable soul and

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<sup>1</sup> Chalkley's Augusta County Records, iii, 64.

<sup>2</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., xi, 123.

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enjoyed the hospitality of others—rich and poor. In the lively diaries he kept during his horseback journeyings about Virginia and North Carolina he described in detail the kinds of entertainment offered him in homes of varying types. In November, 1733, travelling on the frontier in what is now Brunswick County he spent the night in the cabin of Captain Henry Embrey, who, in spite of the simple life carried to excess described by Colonel Byrd, became in after years a man of property and a member of the honorable House of Burgesses. Says the graphic diarist:

“We found the housekeeping much better than the house. Our bountiful landlady had set her oven and all her spits, pots, gridirons and saucepans to work to diversify our entertainment. The worst of it was we . . . were obliged to lodge very sociably in the same apartment with the family, where reckoning men, women and children we mustered no less than nine persons who all pigged very lovingly together.”

This the cultured and wealthy Colonel Byrd—the master of Westover!

At another time and place when he had been entertained in like fashion he comments less amiably on “that evil custom of lying in a house where ten or a dozen people are forced to pig together in one room, troubled with the squalling of peevish, dirty children into the bargain.” But he continues more cheerfully:

“Next morning we ate our fill of potatoes and milk which seemed delicious fare to those who have made a campaign in the woods.”

And again: “Our bounteous landlady cherished us with roast beef and chicken pie.”

Still again he tells of being entertained at a poor planter's house when “the good man” laid him and his



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## HOUSES FROM LOG-CABIN TO MANSION

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two companions in his own bed "where all three nestled together in one cotton sheet and one of brown oznaburgs."

Washington, when a surveyor in The Valley of Virginia in 1748, had a taste of log-cabin life in its roughest form. In March of that year he and his party were thus entertained in the neighborhood of Winchester:

"After supper we were lighted into a room and I not being so good a woodsman as the rest stripped myself very orderly and went into the bed as they called it, when to my surprise I found it to be nothing but a little straw matted together without sheet or anything else but only one thread-bare blanket with double its weight of vermin. I was glad to get up and put on my clothes and lie as my companions did."

Writing to a friend in the following year he says:

"Since you received my letter of October last I have not slept but three or four nights in a bed, but after walking a good deal all the day I have lain down before the fire upon a little hay, straw, fodder or a bearskin, whichever was to be had, with man, wife and children; and happy is he who gets the berth nearest the fire."<sup>3</sup>

Long before these frontier experiences of Byrd and Washington the log-cabin had, in the older part of the colony, become identified with the poor white and the negro, and weather-boarded frame houses with a good proportion of brick ones were the rule among the well-to-do. In 1638 Governor Sir John Harvey, writing to the Privy Council in England, reported that a convenient portion of ground at Jamestown had been allotted to every person that would "undertake to build upon it," and adds, "Since which order, there are twelve houses and stores built in the Towne, one of brick by the Secretary the fairest that ever

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<sup>3</sup> Sparks' "Washington," ii, 416.

was knowne in this countrye for substance and uniformitye, by whose example others have undertaken to build framed houses and to beautifye the place consonant to his Ma'ties Instruction that we should not suffer men to build slight cottages as heretofore."<sup>4</sup>

Brickmaking began very early in the history of the colony, and though a few small lots of bricks were brought from England, most of those used for building Virginia homes were of home manufacture.

Owing to the burning of Jamestown by Nathaniel Bacon in 1676, and its abandonment as the colonial government seat, none of the original houses remain there, but many foundations have been unearthed. These show that for three-quarters of a mile along the river front and scattered about the island there were quite a number of brick houses, including one tenement-like row which were doubtless stores or warehouses. A larger building at the end of this row has been identified as the State House before whose windows the thrilling scene of Nathaniel Bacon's encounter with the royal Governor, Sir William Berkeley, was enacted.

Most of the foundations which have been unearthed are about forty by twenty feet and show deep cellars. As nothing more remains of the houses, it is impossible to say what they were like, but the tower and buttresses of the church, finished about 1640, show that it was a well proportioned building. Part of the walls and a chimney of a small house believed to have been a contemporary of the Jamestown dwellings were to be seen near Hampton until the year 1907, when the bricks—of a fine glazed kind—were used in the restoration of Jamestown Church. Another house of the same type may be seen a few miles above Williamsburg.

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<sup>4</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., iii, 29.



HOUSE NEAR WILLIAMSBURG

A type of the earliest brick dwelling



ROOM AT "BLOOMSBURY," ORANGE COUNTY

Showing corner fireplace



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## HOUSES FROM LOG-CABIN TO MANSION

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An example of the better class of brick house at Jamestown and on the early plantations was "Malvern Hill," a few miles below Richmond, built by a member of the Cocke family early in the seventeenth century. Unhappily, this beautiful little mansion was destroyed by fire within the last few years.

As every trace of most of the houses of the first half of the seventeenth century has long since disappeared, we must depend upon the inventories of the household goods of their owners for an idea of their proportions. From these it seems that the great majority of them were small, with few rooms for their size. Matthew Hubard was a prosperous merchant of York County and had seven English servants, seven horses, forty-one cattle, five pounds worth of silver, and thirty-odd books—among which were a Latin Bible and Prayer Book, Ben Jonson's plays, "Purchas's Pilgrims," and the works of Captain John Smith; yet his house contained only four rooms besides kitchen and buttery.

Later in the seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth, the popular—and generally populous—frame house in the towns and on the plantations varied in size from the one-story, two-room cottage to homesteads of such generous dimensions that they shared with the large brick houses the title of "manor," "mansion" or "great house." Most frequent, whether built of brick or of wood, was the story-and-a-half house, with or without a wing at the rear, and with a small square porch and a "shed-room" kitchen. Many of these are still scattered about the State—their steep roofs and hooded windows and perhaps a great outside chimney at either end bestowing upon them an air of quaint charm. Such a house, if of wood, was generally painted white, and, with its embowering trees

and yard enclosed by a white paling, made a pleasant picture of unpretentious home comfort. The two principal rooms of a house of this character were the parlor, kept for "company," and the hall used as dining and living-room, suggestive of the reception hall of to-day. From it a stairway, with a turn of the foot and broken by a landing half way up, led to attic-like chambers above.

Sometimes this house was elongated by an additional room at one or either end. Such additions had the one-story rectory of Accomac Church, built in 1633, which was "forty feet wide, eighteen feet deep and nine feet in the valley, with a chimney at each end, and on either side of said chimney a small room—one to be used as ye minister's study and the other as a buttery."

The oldest house now standing in Virginia whose date can be positively identified is "Smith's Fort," in Surry County, across the river from Jamestown. It bears the mark of time and neglect, but its thick glazed-brick walls are in a good state of preservation. Its frontage of fifty feet affords a spacious room on either side of the hall through the middle, and plain as is its exterior its parlor is panelled to the ceiling and has fluted pilasters framing the chimney-piece and deep window seats. Thomas Warren, who built it in 1654, was a substantial planter, but not one of the wealthiest men in the colony, and there is no reason to suppose that his house was better than plenty of others of its time.

Nearby, on the river bluff, are traces of the earthworks of the "New Fort" built by captain Smith as a place of retreat from the Indians should it become necessary to abandon Jamestown.

The original farm was given by the Indian king to Thomas Rolfe, son of John Rolfe and Pocahontas, who

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## HOUSES FROM LOG-CABIN TO MANSION

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sold it to Thomas Warren. "Smith's Fort" is now owned and occupied by a negro farmer and his family.<sup>5</sup>

A house of about the same age, though its exact date is not known, is "Parker Place," an early home of the Parker family, on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. It is interesting as illustrating another type of dwelling of the period—the hip-roofed frame house, with glazed-brick gable-ends—and also because it was there that the Governor took refuge when he fled from Jamestown during Bacon's Rebellion.

The large plantation mansion house began to be built toward the end of the seventeenth century and became more numerous in the eighteenth.

"Carter's Creek," in Gloucester County, the earliest home of the Burwell family, which is believed to have been the first of these, met the fate which has overtaken so large a number of Virginia country houses—destruction by fire—only a few years ago. It was modelled after the small English manor house of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, frequently styled the E-shaped house, and was unique in America. The cornice surrounding its walls under the eaves and the tall, clustered, diamond-shaped chimneys made it a remarkably elaborate house to be built in a wilderness. On one of the chimney stacks appeared the initials, in iron, L. A. B.—standing for Lewis and Abigail Burwell—and the date 1692, which probably refers to some improvement, as the house is believed to date from an earlier year. Those who remember it speak of its handsome interior, especially of a detail of the hall decoration—wainscot carved to represent drapery caught at the top by a human mask. This is extremely interesting as it was probably the only instance in America of the use

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<sup>5</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., xxi, 210, 211.





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## HOUSES FROM LOG-CABIN TO MANSION

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buildings connected by curved passage-ways with wings standing away to the front and forming a court, is "Mt. Airy," near the Rappahannock—the home of the Tayloes, who have owned and occupied it for two hundred years. "Shirley," on the James—the Carter home which has been the roof-tree of one family for an equally long time—and "Rosewell," on the York, built by Mann Page in 1730 and destroyed by fire in 1916, had similar wings originally, but they long since disappeared. "Rosewell" had, with these wings, a frontage of two hundred and thirty-two feet. The central building contained fourteen rooms twenty feet square and nine rooms fourteen by seven feet. There were nine passages, and the "great hall" and hall over it were each large enough to have made three large rooms. Much of this space was occupied by the grand stairway, with its balustrade of mahogany richly carved in fruits and flowers, ascending by easy flights to the cupola, which commanded a wide view of York River and the surrounding country. One of the many traditions that made "Rosewell" interesting had it that in this cupola Jefferson wrote the first draft of the Declaration of Independence while on a visit to his life-long friend, John Page.

The main building at "Rosewell" had three full stories, besides garrets and cellars.

"Warner Hall," also in Gloucester, the home of the Warner and Lewis families, which was destroyed by fire but has been rebuilt, was a three-story house, with wings, containing twenty-five rooms, and was unusual in having a roof of tiles—some of which are preserved in the collection of the Virginia Historical Society.

Among other mansions of more or less unique character were H-shaped, L-shaped, and T-shaped houses of both brick and wood. "Stratford" on the Potomac, the

impressive seat of the Lees, and "Tuckahoe," the Randolph home, near Richmond, are well-known examples of the H-shape in which the cross-bar is formed by a large central hall connecting two long wings. "Stratford" and its outbuildings are of glazed brick, while one wing and some of the outhouses of "Tuckahoe"—including the tiny one in which Thomas Jefferson went to school—are of wood.

We have seen Colonel Byrd "pigging" in frontier cabins, let us peep in on him at "Tuckahoe" and get a picture of Colonial Virginia life of a different kind. Bad weather overtook him in the neighborhood of this homestead and detained him several days as the guest of Mrs. Randolph, widow of Thomas Randolph. The lady not only "smiled graciously" upon him and entertained him "very handsomely," at her board, but confided in him the tragical story of her daughter's humble marriage and diverted him with a dish of gossip of "how the parish minister was henpecked by his wife who made herself ridiculous by trying to be a fine lady."

Had the daughter "run away with a gentleman or a pretty fellow there might have been some excuse for her though he were of inferior fortune; but to stoop to a dirty plebeian without any kind of merit!"

To reward this obliging hostess for her varied and spicy entertainment the Colonel read to her and her sister-in-law, Mrs. Fleming, from the popular "Beggar's Opera." And so the rainy days and evenings on the remote plantation were worn away.

"Chelsea," the home of Bernard Moore, in King William County, is a fine example of the T-shaped house. A long hip-roofed dormer-windowed building forms the stem of the letter, while a more imposing structure, with upper

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## HOUSES FROM LOG-CABIN TO MANSION

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and lower porches, provides the cross-bar and is the main building of the mansion.

Less attractive were the huge weather-boarded boxes, with no beauty of line or proportion, but often, as in the case of "Tazewell Hall," the Randolph home in Williamsburg, and "Marmion," the Fitzhugh home in King George County, made surprisingly beautiful within with fine carved wainscoting which must have made a particularly becoming setting for the grandfather's clock, the corner cupboard, the fireside chair, and other picturesque furnishings of the day.

In The Valley of Virginia the log house of pioneer days was succeeded by small stone houses, many of which still remain, and besides them some substantial mansions, also of stone, built late in the eighteenth century. Among these are "Springdale," the old Hite homestead; "Abraham's Delight," the quaintly named house of the Hollingsworths; and "Mt. Zion," the interesting home of the Thrustons.

The eighteenth century house, whether in the low country or in the mountains, was usually entered through a small square porch with sloping roof whose corner supports varied from a simple post to a fluted column.

There was often a "porch chamber," built over the porch or adjoining it at one side.

Sometimes there was no porch, but only a flight of steps leading to the front door—as at "Stratford," where the stone steps are straight and steep, or at "Westover," where they are semicircular and lead to a stately doorway with a carved pineapple—emblem of hospitality—within a broken pediment, above it.

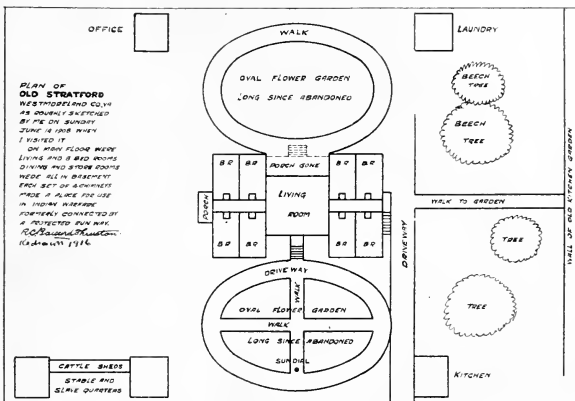
Contrary to the popular impression, the pillared portico generally called colonial did not appear until just before

the Revolution or become frequent until after it. Indeed, "Mt. Vernon," "Nomini Hall" (the home of "Councillor" Robert Carter in Westmoreland), and "Sabine Hall," the home of Landon Carter in Richmond County, are among the few colonial examples known. "Nomini" has long since disappeared, but a full description of it is given in the diary of Philip Fithian, tutor to the Carter children, as it was in 1773.

According to this witness it was a two-story house seventy-six feet long and forty-four wide, with five stacks of chimneys and was built of brick, covered with white plaster. It had a large portico and a "beautiful jut" supported by tall columns, and, as it stood on a high hill, could be seen for six miles. A hundred yards from each corner of the house stood a dormer-windowed, forty-five by twenty-seven foot building. These were used as school-house, laundry, coach-house, and stable, and each of them formed the corner of a square of which the "great house" was the centre—a plan identically like that of "Stratford." In the triangle made by the school-house, laundry, and stable was a "bowling-green," levelled for the popular game of bowls—or ten-pins as we would call it—and laid out in rectangular walks paved with brick.

In front, the lawn—or yard, to use the less pretentious term of the day—was terraced, and an avenue of poplars three hundred yards long, which still exists, and is all that is left of beautiful "Nomini Hall," led to the road. It is easy to imagine that the view of the white pillared mansion through this green aisle was, as Fithian pronounces it, "most romantic."

The interior arrangement was the popular one of four large rooms on a floor with a wide hall through the centre. The dining-room "where we usually sit" and the children's



PLAN OF "STRATFORD" HOUSE AND GROUNDS



BOX MAZE IN THE GARDEN AT "TUCKAHOE"



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## HOUSES FROM LOG-CABIN TO MANSION

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dining-room were on one side, while the "study," containing Mr. Carter's fine collection of books, and a ballroom thirty feet long, were on the other. Upstairs were Mrs. Carter's chamber, the young ladies' chamber, and two guest chambers. The tutor and boys slept in chambers in the upper story of the school-house. "Nomini" must have been a cheerful abode, for Fithian describes the great number of windows with their many "lights" to flood the house with sunshine by day, and the abundance of candlelight in the evening; the twenty-eight fires that glowed and leaped in open chimneys and set brass fire-dogs twinkling in cold weather; the music of harpsichord, violin, flute, and guitar upon each of which one or more of the family played; the frequent treading of the minuet and country dances; merry games in which old and young took part; pleasant gossip of books, and of public and neighborhood affairs; the coming and going of company, and an always bountiful board.

In the *Virginia Gazette* of 1766 Lawrence Taliaferro advertised for sale a plantation on the Rappahannock near Port Royal, upon which was a house with four rooms on the first floor and two above, and which had a twelve-foot porch in front, and at the rear, facing the river, a portico fifty-two feet long and eight wide.

An interesting characteristic of the colonial house was its tendency to grow. Families grew apace in those good old days, and with the need for more room wings thrown out from any point that was most convenient rambled away with charming irregularity of line.

The first mention of a garden in Virginia is in the "Voyages" of De Vries, a Dutch sea captain who was at Jamestown in 1633. He describes a visit to "Littleton," the plantation of George Menifee on James River seven

or eight miles from town, and its two-acre garden, "full of Provence roses, apple, pear and cherry trees, the various fruits of Holland with different kinds of sweet smelling herbs such as rosemary, sage, marjoram and thyme."

Few remains of colonial gardens now exist and information regarding them is meagre. Robert Beverley, the historian, writing about 1700, speaks of the ease with which both fruits and flowers were grown in Virginia and especially mentions the tulips, the "perfection of flavor" of "all sorts of herbs" and the "charming colors" of the humming birds revelling among the blossoms; but he adds that there are but few gardens in Virginia that he considers worthy of the name.

In the *Virginia Gazette* of 1737, Thomas Crease, gardener to William and Mary College, advertises garden pease, beans, and other seeds and also a choice collection of flower roots and "trees fit to plant as ornaments in gentleman's gardens."

"The circle," a driveway from porch to gate around each side of a large or small circular or oval plot planted more or less elaborately in trees, shrubbery, or flowers, was the rule with Virginia farmhouses of all descriptions before the Revolution and long afterward. Beyond this, the more ambitious houses had lawns, groves, and avenues of trees secluding them from the road. At "Stratford" there was an oval flower plot at both front and rear—the one in front having in it a sun-dial.

Other favorite details of the colonial garden, whether terraced or level, were the box-walk, the box-maze, and the rose-embowered summer-house—both dwarf-box and tree-box being much in use. A dwarf-box maze at "Tuckahoe" and one at Mt. Vernon may still be seen. Gone is the original, beautiful garden at "Westover," praised by



Chastellux when with other French officers he visited the Byrd family, soon after the surrender of Yorktown, but some clumps of the ancient box-trees have survived, and the flower garden and its wall have in late years been restored.

Among directions for the "Governor's Pallace" in Williamsburg it was ordered that the flower garden behind the house as well as the courtyard before it be enclosed with a brick wall four feet high with a balustrade on top.

Sometimes there was a large area devoted entirely to flowers. Again, vegetable gardens would have walks bordered with flowers or the first terrace of a "falling" garden would be devoted to flowers while those below would contain grape-arbors and vegetable squares. To one side or below it, and embowered with evergreen shrubs or trees, was often the family graveyard.

Fithian frequently mentions pleasant walks with the Carter family in the garden at "Nomini." On March 16 he noticed that peas were up two or three inches, cowslips and violets beginning to bloom, the English honeysuckle was in leaf, and fig and apricot trees and asparagus beds began to give promise of their delightful offerings.

Colonel Byrd, in his "Progress to the Mines," writes of the garden and "terrace walk" at Governor Spotswood's home at Germanna, and George Braxton's letter book contains a contract with a man whose profession was "the laying out of ornamental grounds," for making a "falling garden" and bowling green at "Newington," "according to the best efforts of his art."

"Ceelys," the Cary home near Hampton, built in 1706 and burned by negroes soon after the Civil War, and "Society Hill," the home of Francis Thornton, King George County, are also known to have had falling gardens. Among gardens some of whose terraces remain are

those at "Sabine Hall" and "Carter's Grove," while in "Mt. Airy" garden, in which in Fithian's time stood "four large, beautiful marble statues," may still be seen a sunken bowling green and a picturesque ruin which was once a conservatory. The terraced court-yard with its stone balustrade in front of the "Mt. Airy" house, and the approach through a deer park, make the grounds unusually elaborate, and at both "Sabine Hall" and "Brandon," the storied James River home of the Harrison family, a park, shaded with splendid trees, stands between the house and the road.

The flower garden at "Brandon" is justly famous. It stretches from the rear entrance of the house to the river and is unbroken by terraces, but with its broad "grass walk" hedged with old-fashioned perennials of every kind, its spaces of bloom and spaces of greensward, its masses of shrubbery, its magnolia, mimosa, smoke, and other ornamental trees and its charming water view, it is a place to dream in and to dream about.

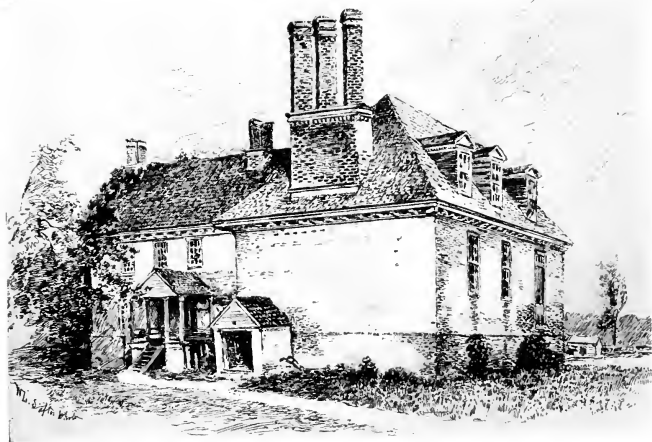
Did the Colonial Virginia carpenters bring their skill in woodwork from England or did they acquire it after they came over? It is impossible to answer, but certain it is that they were artists—though doubtless unconscious ones—and their masterpieces in cornices, wainscoting, mantels, and doorways deserve a place in the annals of American art. In a great number of houses small and large, brick and frame, from the beginning to the end of the period were rooms and halls panelled to the ceiling, chimney-pieces and cornices of chaste design, graceful archways and balustrades, fluted pillars and pilasters—generally of pine or cedar, painted white.

In a few of the greater mansions the wood used was mahogany and the carving correspondingly rich, but the



By courtesy of Macmillan & Company

**E-SHAPED ENGLISH MANOR HOUSE**



**"CARTER'S CREEK," GLOUCESTER COUNTY**

Originally an E-shaped house



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## HOUSES FROM LOG-CABIN TO MANSION

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sumptuous mahogany balustrade and panelling at "Rosewell" and the richly carved doorways and cornices at "Shirley" are not more surprising than the artistic work to be found in far smaller houses such as "Toddsbury," the early home of the Todds and Tabbs of Gloucester—an ancient, wee homestead with a beautiful interior—to name one of the many.

The interesting old Nelson House, at Yorktown, has a spiral staircase built between the walls, winding from the cellar to the top story, whose entrance to each floor is concealed in the panelling, and "Nomini Hall" is also said to have had a secret stairway. Sometimes panelling made possible a secret closet such as one discovered but a few years ago at "Brandon"; while an interesting feature of "Stratford," is a secret room concealed, not behind wainscoting, but within a cluster of four massive chimneys.

Although wood panelling and carving were the almost universal decoration for walls of houses which aspired to anything more æsthetic than whitewashed plaster, tapestry was not unknown, for the inventory of Colonel Francis Eppes shows that in 1679 he had "a suit of tapestry hangings" valued at £18 17/ at his home in Henrico County, then on the frontier,<sup>7</sup> and in 1683, William Fitzhugh, of Stafford County, ordered through his London agent a suit of tapestry hangings for a room twenty feet long, sixteen wide, and nine high. Another letter mentions his "three rooms hung with tapestry."

When the Governor's Palace, in Williamsburg, was built and furnished, in 1710, one of the special orders was that the "great room," in the second story, be hung with gilt leather.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., i, 121.

<sup>8</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., xvii, 37.

There were a few houses with ceilings ornamented with molded and tinted plaster or papier maché—the most notable example being the extremely ornate ceiling in the parlor at “Westover.”

Wall-paper made its appearance in Virginia about the middle of the eighteenth century. The earliest I have found was imported by George Washington for Mt. Vernon in 1757. In September, 1769, a Williamsburg merchant announced in the *Virginia Gazette* that he had “just imported from London a choice collection of the most fashionable paper hangings for rooms, ceilings, and staircases, and in December of the same year James Kidd, upholsterer, of Williamsburg, advertised that he was prepared to “hang rooms with paper or damask.”

The correspondence of Robert Carter of “Nomini” with London merchants shows that he had in his Williamsburg house three parlors hung with papers whose descriptions have quite a modern sound. One of these was “crimson colored,” another white with a pattern of large green leaves, while the third, with which the best parlor was hung, was blue covered with large yellow flowers.<sup>9</sup>

A room was often called after the color of its hangings and this is occasionally indicated in inventories, as in that of Mrs. Elizabeth Digges, who, in 1691, left furniture in a “yellow roome,” a “large roome over against ye yellow roome,” and a “red roome,”<sup>10</sup> while the inventory of Colonel John Tayloe, of “Mt. Airy,” made in 1747, mentions “the green room,” and that of John Spotswood, 1758, “the blue room.”

Interiors were given added charm by the cozy window seats which thick walls afforded, and great chimney-pieces

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<sup>9</sup> Glenn's “Colonial Mansions,” 266.

<sup>10</sup> Wm. and Mary College Quarterly, i, 208.



"CARTERS GROVE," JAMES CITY COUNTY  
Showing terraces





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## HOUSES FROM LOG-CABIN TO MANSION

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which projecting into the room formed deep recesses on either side. Some of these were left open and lighted with many-paned windows, with the usual inviting seats, others filled with built-in cupboards with wooden or latticed-glass doors. Some of the older houses had corner fireplaces, a few of which were tiled.

Rooms oftenest mentioned by name were the hall, the parlor, the parlor chamber, the porch chamber, the room over the parlor chamber, the hall room, the shed room, garrets and closets. The principal bedroom was occupied by the mistress of the house, and the importance with which it was regarded is shown by the names by which it was frequently called—"the chamber" or "the lady's chamber." The inventory of Ralph Wormeley of beautiful "Rose-gill," in Middlesex, made in 1701, names, with various other rooms, the lady's chamber, the room over the lady's chamber, the nursery, and <sup>11</sup> the "old" nursery.

The omission of a dining-room in many inventories indicates the use of the hall, which was parlor too in houses too small to have a room kept for company, like that of Arthur Allen, of Surry, whose inventory, made in 1711, mentions furniture in the chamber, room over the chamber, the hall, room over the hall, east garret, west garret, porch garret, cellar, entry, and pantry; and that of William Fox, of Lancaster, which according to his inventory had in 1718 a hall, a hall-chamber, hall closet, porch-chamber, chamber above stairs, and kitchen. The "chamber above stairs" was doubtless a shelving-roofed, dormer-windowed room.

Another of the many inventories describing furniture in houses which were evidently of the quaint and popular story-and-a-half type is that of Thomas Willoughby, of

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<sup>11</sup> William and Mary College Quarterly, ii, 170.

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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Norfolk County, which in 1713 names a parlor, a parlor-chamber, hall, hall-chamber, porch-chamber, garret over the parlor-chamber, and garret over the hall-chamber.

Twice since Virginia ceased to be "his Majesty's Colony" has it been a battle-ground. From Jamestown to the Revolution, and long afterward, it was a rural district—its homes, standing apart from each other in plantations small or large, or here and there in a straggling village which ambitiously styled itself a city, have been at the mercy of every spark which a wanton breeze could fan into a flame, and changes of ownership following death or decline in fortune have caused household goods to be scattered far and wide.

And so it happens that to-day but a small percentage of these homes and an extremely small percentage of their equipment remain; yet so rich in information about them are the old wills and inventories that but little effort of the imagination is required to recreate them completely furnished.

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### III

## HOUSEHOLD GOODS

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#### FURNITURE



O the heart of the Virginian precious were the sturdy furniture of the oak age, or the later walnut and mahogany, and the good linen, pewter, brass or silver "out of England" for which, through a London agent, he had exchanged his crop of tobacco and which had come over sea to serve him. Whether this furniture was carved or plain, it was made to endure, and in his will he carefully divided it out for the use of his "heirs forever."

It was natural that in a new country where life was hard at best, a good bed upon which to lay down one's weary bones was a possession of first importance, and "my feather bed" or "my feather bed and furniture"—meaning the bedstead, bed-clothing, tester, curtains, valance and all the paraphernalia then supposed to belong to a proper bed—was not only among the most frequent bequests, but a prized heirloom.

It will be remembered that Shakespeare left his second best bed to his wife. The Virginian made a better husband, for he almost invariably left his best feather-bed to his wife and his second best to a favorite child or friend. For instance, in 1719 Orlando Jones, of Williamsburg, bequeathed to his wife his best feather-bed and furniture, and to his daughter his next best feather-bed and furniture,<sup>1</sup> and in 1711, Joseph Ball, of Lancaster, left his wife his "feather-bed, bolsters and all furniture thereto belonging," and his daughter Mary, the mother of Washington, "all

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<sup>1</sup> William and Mary Quarterly, viii, 191.

the feathers in the kitchen loft to be put in a bed for her."

Whether the best bed stood in a chamber on the first floor, "over against the parlor," or in a dormer-windowed "room above stairs," and whether its sheets were of oznaburghs, dowlas or fine Holland, plain—as most of them were—or trimmed with "Elgin lace", like those left by James Sampson, of Isle of Wight, in 1689; whether its curtains were chintz or kidderminster—like those of Thomas Jefferson, great-grandfather of the immortal Thomas—or yellow silk—like those of Mrs. Elizabeth Digges, whose descendants living to-day, in Virginia and outside of it, are legion—such a bed must have made an appealing picture. The apartment in which it stood, whether the one room of a log-cabin or the "lady's chamber" of a mansion, was of generous proportions, for it was intended to accommodate, not an individual, but a family, if necessary, and not only did the "great bed" stand high off of the floor to make room for the trundle-bed which was rolled under it during the day and out again at the children's bedtime, but often there were one or two more large beds in the room. In the inventory of Philip Smith, of Northumberland, 1724, fifteen bedsteads are appraised, and that of Clement Reade, of Lunenburg, shows that he left, in 1765, twelve beds "and furniture."

Less highly esteemed than the downy feather-bed was the "flock-bed," stuffed with bits of wool or cotton or with rags. Yet it, too, was of sufficient value to be handed down by will. In 1652 Thomas Gibson left his daughter his "best flock-bed with rug, bolster and pillow and the fine pair of Holland sheets."

Bed coverings were important items and handsome imported quilts, or quilts of her own handiwork, among the housewife's treasures. In the inventory of Major

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## HOUSEHOLD GOODS

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Peter Walker of Northampton County, made in 1655, we find "a coverlid of tapestry," cambric sheets and an "East Indian quilt." Mrs. Nicholas Morris deeded to her son in 1665 property including "one bed covering with Queen Elizabeth's armes thereon," and Mrs. Elizabeth Wormeley left in 1702 "a crimson satin quilt." Home-made quilts were, of course, far more plentiful, for quilt-making was a favorite occupation and pastime of women of every class. George Lee in his will, 1761, left one of his sons the quilt "worked by his mother."

Another comfort for the bed in constant use was the warming-pan to take the chill from the sheets.

Next in importance to the bed was the chest in all its forms, from the plain or carved wooden box which served the double purpose of seat and receptacle for clothing, to the chest of drawers with or without a dressing-glass topping it, or hung above it, to be found in large numbers in wills and inventories. Late in the period it began to put on airs and to appear under the Frenchified name of *bureau*.

It was natural that a people so fond of dress as our transplanted Londoners should have valued looking-glasses, and they were brought over in a variety of styles. In addition to the dressing-glass of the chamber, the "chimney-glass" and "great looking-glass" were used in any or every room.

Chairs were rare in England until about the time of the settlement of Jamestown. In earlier days there, only the master of the house or the distinguished guest was given a chair; less important persons sat on benches, settles, or stools. The first chairs were ponderous things of oak with solid square backs—which were often panelled and gave them the name of "wainscot chairs"—solid wooden seats and heavy under-bracing. Later came the chair made

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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also of oak, and often elaborately carved—of the high, narrow back with a panel of cane set in and a cane seat; the rail-back and splat-back chair—with seat upholstered with leather or Turkey work—and finally the light and graceful Chippendale and Sheraton and the plainer but worthy rush-bottom and Windsor chairs.

Since, then, the chair was still something of a novelty in the mother country, it is not surprising that during early settlement days it was a rarity in Virginia and that home-made stools, benches, and settles were in general use.

The first chair in America of which there is any record is the green velvet one in which Lord Delaware sat in Jamestown Church. Probably the next is the "Wainscott chaire" bequeathed in 1623, by John Atkins of Jamestown, to his friend Christopher Davison, Secretary of the Colony.<sup>2</sup>

Absence of Virginia wills and inventories for the first half of the seventeenth century makes information concerning personal belongings extremely vague, but we may be sure that with the passing of the log-cabin as the dwelling of the man of property, passed the home-made seat—the stool and bench became the poor man's and the frontiersman's chair as the log-cabin was his home. The earliest existing records of such things show that there were soon chairs in great number and variety in homes of the better class. There were great chairs, small chairs, high-back chairs, low-back chairs, arm-chairs, elbow chairs, plain wooden chairs, Russia leather chairs, Turkey-work chairs, willow chairs, cane chairs, Dutch chairs, silk chairs, silver-stuff chairs, but no rocking chairs. As the log-cabin was called the Virginia house, the rocking chair might well be called the Yankee chair, for it was evidently not known

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<sup>2</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., xi, 154.

STAIRWAY, "WESTOVER"







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## HOUSEHOLD GOODS

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until a later day when some ingenious New Englander with more eye for comfort than beauty invented it to make future generations sit down and call him blessed.

Inventories which remain show that Major Peter Walker of Northampton County left as early as 1655 six leather chairs, three Dutch chairs and "some willow chairs"; Colonel John Carter of Lancaster County, in 1679, fifteen Turkey-work and twenty-one leather chairs, also eight Turkey-work cushions; George Nichols, of Isle of Wight County, in 1677—among other interesting possessions—"a great joynd chair," evidently a wainscot chair. There is no way of ascertaining the age of these or other pieces of furniture, as there is no record of how long they had been in the possession of their owners, but frequently the appraisers specify that they were "old."

A few examples of chairs taken at random from a mass of eighteenth century inventories, from scattered sections, may prove of interest. Colonel William Churchill, of Middlesex County, left in 1714 four wooden, twelve Turkey-work, twelve Russia-leather chairs and a "great green" chair; Peter Presley, of Northumberland County, in 1719, eighteen leather chairs; Matthew Hubbard, of York County, in 1745, twelve "high back leather" ones; Mrs. Elizabeth Stanard, widow of William Stanard, of Middlesex, in 1747, ten high-back, two low-back, and twelve cane chairs, and a cane couch; Clement Reade, of Lunenburg County, in 1765, nineteen rush-bottom and twenty-five leather chairs.

John Fontaine, describing in his diary a visit to Robert Beverley, at his home "Beverley Park," in 1716, says:

"He hath good beds in his house but no curtains and instead of cane chairs he hath stools made of wood."

This was evidently a simplicity of life that was conspicuously unusual.

The chair commonly called "roundabout" was certainly familiar in Virginia, for a number of them still remain, though not under that name. It was probably the "elbow chair" of the wills and inventories. Fit companion for the stately canopied four-poster, frequently called the "great bed," was the winged fireside chair, or "great chair."

The popular Turkey-work upholstery was imported into England from the Orient in proper sizes for chair bottoms. Turkey carpets, too, were plentiful in England and Virginia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, though they were not found on the floor, save in rare instances when they were laid beside or around the bed, but were used as table-covers. Pictures of interiors by the seventeenth century Dutch painters show tables of various sizes covered with these beautiful carpets often reaching to and sweeping the floor—their weight and richness of color clearly indicated—and they explain the frequent mention in a Virginia will of a "table with carpet of Turkey-work."

To quote a few of the many examples, Mrs. Amory Butler, of Rappahannock, left in 1673—along with a "great looking-glass," "an oval table," "a napkin press," and other things which indicate refinement of living and easy circumstances—"a Turkey carpet," while in the inventory of Edward Digges, of York, 1692, we find two Turkey-work carpets besides nine Turkey-work chairs and a Turkey-work couch.

From an order of Court in 1641, enumerating articles reserved for the widow of Captain Adam Thoroughgood, of Lower Norfolk County, we may learn what was con-

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## HOUSEHOLD GOODS

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ceived to be "a fit allowance" for furnishing the chamber of a gentlewoman of means at that early day. The lady was given "one bed with blankets, rugs, and the furniture thereunto belonging; two pairs of sheets and pillow-cases; one table with carpet; table-cloth and napkins; knives and forks; one cupboard and cupboard cloths; six chairs, six stools, six cushions; six pictures hanging in the chamber; one pewter basin and ewer; one warming pan; one pair of andirons in the chimney; one pair of tongs; one fire shovel; one chair of wicker for a child." The cupboard was to contain the following pieces of silver: "One salt cellar, one bowl, one tankard, one wine-cup, one dozen spoons."<sup>3</sup>

Very fortunate was this lady in being the proud possessor of forks, for these novelties were scarce even in England.

Next in importance to the chamber was the dining-room or hall, whose principal pieces of furniture besides chairs were, of course, the table and the cupboard. The earliest tables were like the benches and stools, hasty, home-made affairs, and it is likely that they often consisted of boards laid upon trestles at meal time and set aside when not in use, after a time-honored English custom from which the term "the board," meaning the dining-table, was derived. The inventory of a small planter of Lower Norfolk County shows that he left, in 1643, a "table frame and two planks."

Dining, serving, and tea tables appear plentifully in the wills and inventories later in the seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth. Colonel John Carter of Lancaster left in 1670 "six Spanish tables."

Among housewives who could boast of a drawing table

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<sup>3</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., ii, 416, 417.

was Mrs. Amory Butler, who left one in her will, in 1673.<sup>4</sup> This interesting piece of furniture—the first form of extension table—had slabs at each end which could be folded under when not in use and drawn out and supported by wooden braces upon occasion.

Styles of cupboard frequently mentioned are the corner cupboard and the court cupboard—a short, tall cupboard with a closet below and open shelves for the display of table service above. Among early owners of court cupboards was George Nicholls, as his bequest of one in 1677 proves.<sup>5</sup>

In 1732 Colonel Thomas Jones, of Williamsburg, settled on his wife, with other property, quite a complete equipment for a dining-room—including a corner-cupboard on which stood seven punch bowls—“all of which things,” says the deed, “are now in a room of the dwelling of said Thomas Jones called the Hall, and most of them are part of the usual furniture of the hall.”<sup>6</sup>

The inventory of Ambrose Fielding of “Wickocomoco Hall,” made in 1674, gives us quite a clear picture of the interior of a well-furnished seventeenth century home whose rooms, though they were doubtless large ones, numbered only five—three of which were downstairs, two above.<sup>7</sup> The “greate room,” which was evidently the hall, had in it a “long dining table,” a serving table, a small table, fourteen rush-bottom chairs, two chests, a cupboard, a pair of andirons, a bottle case and bottles, a supply of linen, earthenware, glass, and pewter, two brass candlesticks, a brass kettle, a brass mortar and pestle, spoons of

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<sup>4</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., iii, 65.

<sup>5</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., v, 286.

<sup>6</sup> Jones Papers, Library of Congress.

<sup>7</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., xiv, 205, 207.



PATRICK HENRY'S "ELBOW CHAIR"



CHIPPENDALE CHAIR  
Owned by the Virginia Historical Society



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## HOUSEHOLD GOODS

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silver and of "alchemy," a silver bowl and drinking vessels of silver including a tankard and two tumblers marked with the Fielding arms. There were also in this dining hall a fowling piece, a musket, two pistols, a rapier, and a hanger.

"Ye parlor chamber" contained a "great bedd," with curtains and valance lined with silk, damask tester, silk counterpane, linen sheets, a feather-bed and blankets; a leather chair, a silk chair, a "carved chest with locks and keys," a pewter basin and ewer, a looking-glass, a warming pan, a brass candlestick, an ivory comb, two clothes brushes. The two upper chambers were more plainly and scantily furnished.

In the parlor were an oval table, a small table, seven Turkey-work and three Russian leather chairs, a silk chair, a Dutch carved chair, a tapestry couch, a court cupboard, some books—including a large Bible—a Turkey carpet, a pair of brass andirons, a pair of silver candlesticks, four family portraits and three other pictures.

"Wickocomoco Hall" was in Northumberland, one of the counties of the Northern Neck of Virginia, far from the little James River metropolis, or from any other town.

Among handsome novelties to be found in eighteenth century parlors were Alexander Spotswood's two japanned chests on castors, japanned tea-table and six walnut chairs with silver-stuff covers—all of which appear in his inventory, made in Orange in 1740. Japanned tables and cabinets were to be found in a good number of houses at this period, and at about the same time the *escritoire*, or "scrutoire" as it was often called, became a popular piece of furniture for the parlor and other rooms. For instance, Francis Eppes, of Henrico, in 1733, bequeathed to an heir his "scrutoire standing in the parlor made of black

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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walnut with glass doors," in 1746 Henry Lee, of Westmoreland, left one of his sons an "escritoire made of mahogany," while in the inventory of John Woodbridge, of Richmond County, 1769, we find a "desk and bookcase with glass doors."

As time went on and fortunes and houses became larger, correspondence between the Virginia planters and London merchants, as well as other records, bear witness that furniture and manners became more luxurious.

Of course it was to be expected that the house provided for the royal governor would be in keeping with the dignity of his office as the king's representative in Virginia, but the orders of 1710 for the equipment of the "Pallace" in Williamsburg seem surprisingly fine for so early a day. The orders specify three dozen "strong fashionable chairs," three large tables, three large looking-glasses and four chimney glasses for the lower apartments. Also "one marble buffette or sideboard with a cistern and fountain."

The "great room" in the second story was to be furnished with gilt leather hangings and sixteen chairs to match, two large looking-glasses with the arms of the Colony on them "according to the new mode," two small tables to stand under the looking-glasses, two marble tables and eight glass sconces. A large looking-glass was ordered for the largest of the bed-chambers, four chimney glasses for the other chambers and a "great lanthorn" for the hall.<sup>8</sup>

The "great looking-glass" was a favorite ornament for the parlor of the well-to-do Virginian, of both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and it appears over and over again in wills and inventories. George Nicholls left one in 1677. Col. William Byrd, writing in his "Progress

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<sup>8</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., xvii, 37.



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## HOUSEHOLD GOODS

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to the Mines" of a visit to Governor Spotswood, in 1732, says: "I was carried into a room elegantly set off with pier glasses."

John Hunter, of Williamsburg, left in 1760, with a house full of fine furniture, in oak, walnut, and mahogany, a gilt pier glass and gilt sconces,<sup>9</sup> and at about the same date Councillor Carter of "Nomini" ordered from London, for his splendidly equipped town house in Williamsburg, a "great looking-glass" four by six and a half feet—"the glass to be in many pieces agreeable to the present fashion." The house had marble hearths, and stairway-candles in wrought brass sconces with glass globes.<sup>10</sup>

Especially interesting is an order from Washington to a London merchant showing the style in which he fitted up Mt. Vernon in 1757. He was then Colonel Washington—with the laurels won in the French and Indian War still fresh—a bachelor and a beau. It was two years before he won a bride, but his mind was running on matrimony and it is more than likely that in importing furnishings for the principal chamber in his house he was indulging in a dream which doubtless came true of its becoming some day his bridal chamber. He elected to make it a yellow room and ordered for it "a mahogany bedstead with carved and fluted pillars and yellow silk and worsted damask hangings; window curtains to match; six mahogany chairs, with gothic arch backs and seats of yellow silk and worsted damask, an elbow chair, a fine neat mahogany serpentine dressing table, with a mirror and brass trimmings, a pair of fine carved and gilt sconces."

For the parlor he ordered a marble chimney-piece and "a neat landskip" to hang over it. In 1759 he ordered

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<sup>9</sup> William and Mary Quarterly, viii, 147.

<sup>10</sup> Glenn's "Colonial Mansions," 266.

“two wild beasts not to exceed twelve inches in length,” and “sundry small ornaments for the chimney-piece.” The London agent sent “a groupe of Æneas carrying his Father out of Troy,” a Flora, a Bacchus, two vases with faces and festoons of grapes and vine leaves, “all neatly finished and bronzed with copper,” and suggested that the Æneas group be placed in the middle of the chimney-piece, the vases on either side of it and the Flora at one end, the Bacchus at the other. He also sent two lions “bronzed with copper after the antique Lyons in Italy,” and assured Colonel Washington that “of all the wild beasts as could be made there is none thought better than the Lyons.”

And now appear floor coverings. In the ship that brought the outfit for the yellow chamber came Wilton carpets, wall papers, bed and window curtains of blue chintz for a much simpler room, and also fifty yards of best, yard wide, royal matting.<sup>11</sup> Councillor Carter had Wilton carpets in his Williamsburg house a year or two later, and some time before the Revolution Colonel George William Fairfax had at “Belvoir,” near Mt. Vernon, a “large Wilton Persian carpet.”

“Belvoir” contained many other items of interest, among them the equipment of Colonel Fairfax’s dressing room. In it were an oval glass in a burnished gold frame, a mahogany shaving table, a mahogany desk, four chairs and covers, a mahogany settee-bedstead with Saxon green covers, a mahogany Pembroke table, fire-dogs, shovel, tongs and fender.<sup>12</sup>

In a letter from William Nelson, of York, to Messrs.

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<sup>11</sup> Mt. Vernon Inventory. Preface.

<sup>12</sup> “Barons of the Potomac and Rappahannock,” M. D. Conway, 218.

From a photograph by J. J. Hill, Post

THE DINING ROOM AT "MT. AIRY"





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## HOUSEHOLD GOODS

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Thomas and Rowland Hunt, merchants, of London, in 1772, he says:

“I am much obliged to you for the elegant mahogany cistern as well as the convenience to preserve the gravy warm, but do you observe that these elegancies are so many incitements to luxury to which Virginians are but too prone.”<sup>13</sup>

Robert Beverley, the historian, writing of the Virginians about the year 1700, says:

“They are such abominable ill husbands that though their country be filled with wood, yet they have all their woodenware from England, their cabinets, chairs, tables, stools, chests, cart-wheels, and all other things, even so much as their bowls and birchen brooms to the eternal reproach of their laziness.”

Beverley must have been referring to the wealthier planters, for there were after the earliest years numbers of carpenters in Virginia among slaves, indentured servants and free men. A quantity of homely but serviceable furniture was made by them, and later plenty of good pieces were of colonial workmanship.

In a list of articles to be sold in a private house in Williamsburg in 1768 the *Virginia Gazette* advertises “sundry tables and chairs of wild cherry.” These and the chests of drawers and other articles of cherry mentioned in wills and inventories were doubtless of Virginia wood—and make.

In 1766, “B. Bucktrout, cabinet-maker from London,” announced in the *Gazette* that he was doing, in his shop in Williamsburg, “all kinds of cabinet-work in the newest fashions,” and could furnish “the mathematical gouty chair,” and in 1769 a Norfolk merchant advertised that he

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<sup>13</sup> William and Mary Quarterly, vii, 29.

had just received a cargo of "choice mahogany and log-wood."

In 1770 a Williamsburg cabinet-maker named Atwell made two bedsteads, three tables, and a dozen Windsor chairs for "Councillor" Carter, and in 1772 Bucktrout made him "eight mahogany chairs and four elbow chairs."<sup>14</sup>

In the absence of details in regard to the work of these early cabinet-makers we can only conjecture that they used English furniture as patterns and we are supported by Bucktrout's promise to reproduce the London fashions. Chippendale and Sheraton were the fashion there, and much of such Colonial Virginia furniture as remains shows the influence of these famous designers.

That Virginia occasionally patronized the cabinet-makers of other colonies is shown by an announcement in the *Gazette* in January, 1739, that the sloop *Ruth*, of Rhode Island, had entered York River with "four cases of drawers, four desks and other things."

Though watches of gold and of silver were plentiful in Virginia from quite an early day, clocks were rare until the middle of the eighteenth century, when they added an attractive as well as useful detail to the equipment of the "great hall." One of the earliest appearing in the inventories is that of Ralph Wormeley, of Middlesex, in 1701. Among other owners of clocks in different parts of the colony were Henry Lee, of Westmoreland, who bequeathed one to a son in 1746; James Ball, of Lancaster, to whose clock his grandson, Burgess Ball, fell heir in 1754; Matthew Hubard, of York, whose clock was appraised at six pounds sterling in 1745; and Mrs. Ann Mason, of Stafford, who left one worth twelve pounds in 1762.

In March, 1768, the *Virginia Gazette* advertised a lot-

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<sup>14</sup> Carter Papers, i, 98-129.

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tery for disposing of furniture belonging to James Hamilton, including "an eight-day clock," and in 1766 James Galt, "clock and watch-maker, and jeweler," of Williamsburg, announced through the same medium his intention to remove to "Shockoe, near Richmond town," where he "would keep clocks in repair by the year at reasonable rates."

In striking contrast to the state of ease and polite living to which people of means in eastern, and older, Virginia had arrived by the middle of the eighteenth century was the condition of the settlers across the mountains. It was in 1716 that Governor Spotswood and his "Knights of the Golden Horseshoe" made their memorable journey to the top of the Blue Ridge and white men looked upon the beautiful Shenandoah Valley for the first time. Long before that explorers and traders had blazed their way in the southwest to a point some distance past the site of the present city of Roanoke; but when Washington was furnishing his best chamber at Mt. Vernon with carved mahogany and yellow damask "The Valley" was still in the pioneer stage, the dwellers in its cabins contending with difficulties like to those with which the early settlers at Jamestown were familiar, including fear of the Indians. After the beginning of the French and Indian War they, too, had palisaded forts to which the people could flee for refuge; but it was more difficult to haul furniture through wood and stream and over mountains than to bring it across seas in sailing vessels, and no wonder the log cabins of The Valley were even more scantily supplied with conveniences of living than had been those at Jamestown.

Waddell, the well-known historian of Augusta County, tells us that these homes were for the first fifteen years or more, hardly better furnished than the wigwams of the Indians, and that while most of their owners had horses,

cattle, and Bibles, their minute inventories mention no furniture. Kercheval in his "History of the Valley," draws a similar picture. Instead of "feather-beds and furniture," these sturdy folk had pillows, bolsters, and bed-ticks filled with straw or chaff, laid on the floor or on rude home-made bedsteads, and it seems that these and such tables, stools, and benches as necessity must have compelled them to knock up were not deemed worth appraisalment.

They had linen brought by the Scotch-Irish emigrants from their own country—one of whom, Jean Bohannon, in 1747, bequeathed her daughter Margaret "the table-cloth brought from Ireland"; but not until <sup>15</sup> 1749 does the first table found in the records by Mr. Waddell appear. This was the property of Patrick Cook, who had also two table-cloths, seven chairs, three beds, a looking-glass, wooden trenchers and dishes, one knife and two forks. Joseph Walton and Samuel Cunningham each had knives and forks two years before this, and Cunningham had nineteen pewter spoons and four pewter dishes. It was the custom in The Valley, as in Eastern Virginia, to keep pewter on hand for the moulding of table-ware, and many spoon moulds are mentioned. In 1751 David Flournoy left a dozen pewter plates.

In 1762 Delft ware appears in The Valley inventories. The good man is now becoming thrifty, the good wife must have something in which to keep her treasured plates and dishes, and so, in 1764, we find a corner cupboard. Perhaps this was made by George Inglebird, the clever carpenter employed by John Latham, in 1766, to make him a table "with four divisions in the drawer," and a bedstead.<sup>16</sup> Chests of drawers and other comforts to make

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<sup>15</sup> Chalkley's Augusta Records, iii, 7.

<sup>16</sup> Chalkley's Augusta Records, i, 473.





A "GREAT BED"



SOME OF THE "SHIRLEY" SILVER



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## HOUSEHOLD GOODS

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glad the heart of the housewife made their appearance about the same time, and some, like John Hall, who died in 1767, had coffee-pots. In 1769 Thomas Beard bequeathed his wife an elbow chair, and by this token of leisure we know that the prosperity<sup>17</sup> for which nature destined The Valley had set in, the log-cabin age was soon to be followed by the stone-house age and bareness to give place to comfort.

The housewife of the older settlements was rich in table and bed linens of various kinds and qualities. At a time when forks were expensive rarities, napkins were necessary for keeping their predecessors in handling food fairly clean. Almost every inventory save those of the extremely poor has its list of linen, and even the planter's wife of moderate means had a good store of Holland or its cotton substitutes—dowlas, canvas, and oznaburgs.

Mrs. Elizabeth Beasley, of Surry, seems to have been especially well equipped in this line. In 1677 she complained that she had lost during Bacon's Rebellion the year before "twenty-two pairs of fine dowlas sheets, six pairs of Holland sheets, forty-six pillow cases, twenty-four fine napkins, two tablecloths and thirty-six towels, most of them fine dowlas."<sup>18</sup>

There was no china in use in the earliest days of the colony. Wooden trenchers and pewter plates, dishes and liquor-vessels, with a tankard or two of the more precious silver—which were passed around with happy unconsciousness of possible germs—made up the table service. The inventory of William Stafford shows that he left, in 1644, eleven pewter dishes, four pewter porringers, and one pewter flagon, and in 1670 the wealthy John Carter, of Lan-

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<sup>17</sup> Chalkley's Augusta Records.

<sup>18</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., v, 372.

caster County, left a hundred and ten pounds of the "best sort of pewter," sixty pounds of the "middle sort of pewter," and five pounds of "old broken pewter."

Table knives were in use, but scarce, in the earlier time, but as every man had his own knife in his pocket, the lack was not seriously felt. Later, among the prosperous, ivory handled knives and forks like the dozen of Mrs. Elizabeth Stanard, of Middlesex, silver forks and "silver hafted" knives like the "dozen in a case" of Major Harry Turner, of King George County, put the pocket knife—and fingers—out of commission as table implements.

Early in the eighteenth century china began to appear in good quantities. Edmund Berkeley, of Middlesex, left in 1718, two china bowls, two sets of fine china teacups and saucers, eleven chocolate cups and saucers, a china teapot, a sugar dish of china and one of glass, and a china teacanister. Numbers of inventories from this time on include china and glass in various quantities from a "parcel of earthenware" to complete equipment. Attractive items from the collection in the well furnished house of Mrs. Elizabeth Stanard are a dozen delft soup plates, a dozen shallow delft plates, a dozen large delft bowls.

In a country where it was often necessary to provide entertainment for a hungry traveller or a party of hungry travellers on short notice, the kitchen furniture was vastly important. Kettles of copper and of brass and "great iron pots" appear frequently as heirlooms, and inventories show pantry and kitchen appointments of varying degrees, from those of a poor man of early date who had only an oven, a pot, a skillet, two knives, two forks, two tea-cups, and two saucers, to those of Philip Ludwell of his Majesty's Council. This gentleman had, in the late rich years of the eighteenth century, at historic "Greenspring," where Sir Wil-

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## HOUSEHOLD GOODS

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liam Berkeley, from whom the Ludwells inherited it, had kept open house for the Cavaliers, the following aids in the exercise of hospitality:

Twenty-two blue and white china dishes, seven and a half dozen blue and white china plates, eleven red, white, and gilt china dishes, thirty-seven red, white, and gilt china plates, five red, white, and gilt bowls, eleven blue and white bowls, three sets of red, white, and gilt cups and saucers, two sets of blue and white cups and saucers, one set of white cups and saucers, fourteen chocolate cups and saucers, eight brown cups and two tea-pots, seven decanters, eight fruit bowls, thirty-nine finger bowls, fifteen glass tumblers, four glass salts, six cruets, two mustard pots. Also, cider glasses, wine glasses, strong beer glasses, jelly glasses, glass salvers. Also, blue and white earthenware, stone sweet-meat pots, lead chocolate moulds, tart-moulds, ivory knives and forks, dessert knives and forks, sweet-meat knives and forks, tea-spoons, tea-boards, tea-chests and canisters, coffee and chocolate pots, a coffee roaster and toaster, a coffee mill, copper kettles, tea-kettles, fish-kettles, and "other kettles"; a copper cooler, brass chafing dishes, pewter plates, hot-water plates and dishes, plate-baskets and hampers, nut-crackers, pie and cheese plates, sifters, flat-irons and stands, a mortar and pestle, milk pans, butter pots, pot-hooks, pot-racks, spit-racks, a roasting jack, a Dutch oven, frying and dripping pans, preserving, sauce and stew-pans, ladles, skimmers, and graters, bell-metal skillets, gridirons, trivets, flesh-forks, pickle-pots, spice mortars, and so forth.

The inventory shows that the rest of Colonel Ludwell's house was as well equipped as his kitchen and pantry and that he had what doubtless added much to his comfort there

in the neighborhood of swampy Jamestown, "mosquito curtains."<sup>19</sup>

Among household equipments of families of all degrees was the powdering tub, used in salting meat. The cooking of rich and poor was done on the wide hearth of the great-chimney, in which hung the pot-hooks and hangers and the roasting jack.

PLATE

John Hammond, who spent a good many years in Virginia, and wrote "Leah and Rachel" about the middle of the seventeenth century, said in that quaint pamphlet that there was a good store of silver in the homes of many of the planters, but absence of records for the earliest years and destruction of many of the later ones will always make anything like a complete list of silverware in the colony impossible. Certain it is, however, that there was an amazing quantity of plate in use, varying from the precious little collection of the small planter who left each child a spoon, to the owners of great estates whose silver was appraised at from one hundred to over six hundred pounds sterling. I find in my own incomplete notes names, with dates, of nearly two hundred owners of silver—sixty-odd in the seventeenth century and the rest in the eighteenth.

The earliest plate of any kind in the American colonies was of course the Communion Service of Jamestown Church. Doubtless Lord Delaware, with his noble rank and his regard for the amenities of life, brought table silver when he came out as governor in 1609, and very likely Sir Thomas Gates and Sir Thomas Dale would have felt it necessary to their dignity as knights and governors of his Majesty's first colony to be so provided, but we have no proof that they were.

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<sup>19</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., xxi, 415, 416.



GOVERNOR SPOTSWOOD'S SILVER TEA CADDY

With his arms and crest





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## HOUSEHOLD GOODS

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The first family silver of which this witness has seen record is that of Sir George Yeardly, who, dying in 1627, left all his plate to his wife, Lady Temperance Yeardly.

Sir George was said to have brought only his sword with him on his first coming to Virginia, in 1609, as "George Yeardly, gentleman," but in 1618 when during a visit to England, he was knighted and commissioned as Governor of the colony, an enemy wrote of him that "he flaunted it up and down the street with extraordinary bravery, with fourteen or fifteen fair liveries after him."

John Pory, Speaker of the famous First Legislature in America—convened by Governor Yeardly in 1619—writes in that year that when Sir George "and his lady" were last in London he was able "out of his mere gettings" in Virginia to spend nearly three thousand pounds to furnish him for the return voyage. It is likely that the plate bequeathed Lady Temperance was brought over then.

This indefinite bequest of "all my plate" to a single heir, or to be divided among heirs, so often appearing in the wills, is extremely tantalizing, but in many cases picturesque items are named. Among the earliest of the remaining inventories is that of John Lanckfield, of Lower Norfolk County, a man of moderate means who left, in 1640, a silver dram cup and a silver spoon.

When the estate of Captain Adam Thoroughgood, also of Lower Norfolk, was divided in 1642, it included, with other silver, two dozen spoons and two small bowls, and the widow "did claim them as a gift given her by her brothers, Sir John Thoroughgood, Knt., and Mr. Thomas Thoroughgood at her marriage with their brother Captain Thoroughgood." This is doubtless the earliest reference to silver as a wedding present in America.

To quote a few of the earliest wills which have been

preserved, in 1641 Anthony Barham, of Warwick County, bequeathed his god-daughter Sarah Butler, daughter of his "friend and gossip, William Butler," 30 shillings to buy a wine cup; in 1643 William Burdett, gentleman, of Northampton County, left his son Thomas "the silver spoons with his name engraved on them," and in 1653 George Ludlow, of York County, left to one friend "my great silver tankard with my arms on it," and to another the "silver tankard lately brought in."

As far out of the world as were the Virginians they thought much of keeping in the fashion. In 1655 Colonel Richard Lee took some of his plate to London to have its fashion changed. There was a law against exporting silver from England, and when he was about to embark on his homeward voyage the customs officers at Gravesend seized his "trunk of plate," but on his affidavit that it was all intended for his own use and that most of it had been brought from Virginia a year and a half before, and that every piece had his coat-of-arms on it, it was given back to him.<sup>20</sup> The inference is that silver which had become old-fashioned must have been here some time.

The McCarty, at their coming to Virginia, about 1660, brought quite an array of silver with them from Ireland. A handsome collection, most likely the same, appears in the will of Captain Daniel McCarty, of Westmoreland County, in 1724, and much of it came down in direct line to the late Captain W. Page McCarty, of Richmond. He was the happy possessor of twelve tankards, six salt cellars, a tea urn, and a sugar dish—all engraved with the McCarty arms and some of it bearing the date 1620.<sup>21</sup>

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Hannah Fox was one of the most fortunate young

<sup>20</sup> Lee's "Lee of Virginia," 21.

<sup>21</sup> Hayden's Va. Genealogies, 85.

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## HOUSEHOLD GOODS

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women of her time. In 1662 her father, David Fox, of Lancaster made a deed to take effect after his death, giving her all the plate with which he was "then possessed withal"—namely, three dozen large silver spoons, one large syllabub dish with a cover, a tankard and a caudle cup, each holding a quart, a sugar dish in the form of a scallop shell, an engraved fruit dish with a foot, a plain fruit dish, a large salt cellar, two small ones and one trencher salt, two "large, substantial" porringers, a wine bowl, a sack cup, a large dram cup, a basin holding a gallon, a plain caudle cup with three legs.

During Bacon's Rebellion in 1676 some of his soldiers seized the house of Mr. Arthur Allen, in Surry County, and fortified it, and it has ever since been known as "Bacon's Castle." According to a deposition after the Rebellion, one of the men was very inquisitive about Mr. Allen's plate, "importuning the deponent to tell where it was hid,"<sup>22</sup> which suggests that silver plate was supposed to be found in a gentleman's house.

Interesting bequests made by Mrs. Katherine Isham in her will made in 1686 and sealed with the Isham arms, are her "best silver tankard," her "next best silver tankard," her "small silver tankard," her "biggest silver tankard but one," her "largest silver porringer," and her "great silver cup."<sup>23</sup>

Novelty characterizes the description of plate bequeathed by James Sampson of Isle of Wight, in 1689. He gave his daughter Margaret a silver bowl and two wine-cups, "one with a foot and the other with a bulge," and three silver spoons "with nobs at the ends."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., v, 370.

<sup>23</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., iv, 124.

<sup>24</sup> William and Mary Quarterly, vii, 245.

William Fitzhugh, of Stafford, had a great quantity of plate bearing his arms, which he bought not only for its useful and ornamental qualities, but because he believed it to be a safe investment for his children. In a letter to a London merchant in 1690, acknowledging the safe receipt of a lot of silver, he says it arrived "just in time for a several days' visit from the Governor." His will, made in 1700, disposes of fifty-eight pieces of massive silver table service, besides spoons—including nineteen plates, three bread plates, eight dishes, a set of castors, a "Montieth," seven candlesticks, two pairs of candle snuffers with stands, and a chocolate-pot, and it is believed that he had already given many pieces to his children.

Beer and wines were on every table—hence the popularity of tankards and wine cups. With the use of tea and coffee, toward the end of the seventeenth century, silver tea and coffee pots make their appearance in the records and become numerous thereafter. In 1716 Mrs. Elizabeth Churchill, of Middlesex, bequeathed with much other plate to her daughter Elizabeth a silver tea-kettle and tea-kettle stand, and in 1733 the will of Captain Francis Eppes, of Henrico, with a good supply of silver, including a "large flowered tankard," names a teapot. The beautiful tea-caddy of Governor Spotswood, bearing arms, is still in existence.

An advertisement in the *Maryland Gazette* for silver stolen from the house of Mr. Thomas Lee, of Virginia, in 1728-29, mentions among the missing pieces a chocolate-pot, a teapot, and a coffee-pot.

During the prosperous eighteenth century there was, naturally, a great increase in the quantity of silver brought to Virginia. A cherished handful of teaspoons took the shine off of the pewter in a large number of little farm-

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## HOUSEHOLD GOODS

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houses, while in the "great" houses of the large plantations the soft light of wax candles fell on cupboards and newly acquired and new-fashioned sideboards sparkling with plate of goodly weight and elegant design.

In 1769 the silver plate at "Westover" was valued at six hundred and sixty-two pounds. It included an epergne worth fifty pounds and many other fine pieces. The complete list is worth quoting in full and here it is: "An epergne, a pitcher and stand, a bread basket, ten candlesticks, a snuffer stand, a large cup, two large punch bowls, two coffee pots, six cans, a sugar dish, a sugar basket, two sauce boats, eight salt cellars and spoons, two sets of castors, a cruet, a large waiter, two middle sized waiters, four small castors, a cream boat, four chaffing dishes, a tea kettle, a 'reine,' two pudding dishes, a fish slice, a sucking bottle, a large sauce-pan, a punch strainer, a punch ladle, a soup ladle, a small sauce-pan, four ragout spoons, two large sauce spoons, three marrow spoons, seven dozen knives and six dozen and eleven forks, eleven old-fashioned table-spoons, four dozen best large table-spoons, two dozen dessert spoons, three pairs of tea tongs, two tea strainers, one mustard spoon, one dozen new teaspoons, eleven second best teaspoons, six camp teaspoons, seven old teaspoons, five children's spoons, a large camp spoon, two small camp spoons, a camp cup, a broad candlestick."<sup>25</sup>

In the latter part of the eighteenth century silver spoons appeared in small numbers in The Valley, where as early as 1746 Katherine Green was charged with stealing a silver plate from "David Kinked, joiner, and wife."<sup>26</sup>

From this it would seem that making tables and chairs was a thrifty trade in those parts.

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<sup>25</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., ix, 81, 82.

<sup>26</sup> Chalkley's Augusta County Records, i, 431.

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## IV SOCIAL LIFE

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### I—THE HOME



HE vast majority of Virginians throughout the colonial period were country people, born and bred. True, many of the emigrant founders of families built up their fortunes by engaging in business as merchants or as Indian traders, but even these cultivated the profitable tobacco and other crops with enthusiasm, and their sons, as a rule, aspired to be and were planters only.

In 1666 Governor Berkeley, writing to Lord Arlington of conditions in the colony, said:

“We live after the simplicity of the past age, indeed unless the danger of our country gave our fears tongues and language we should shortly forget all sounds that did not concern the business and necessities of our farms.”

The county seat and warehouse were little centres of public and private business, and of news, and during the seventeenth century Jamestown, with its fifty to sixty houses, was known throughout the colony as “town.” In the later eighteenth century Norfolk became a prosperous port with full-rigged ships and smaller craft constantly coming and going, and several thousands of inhabitants. Williamsburg had about one thousand, and Petersburg, Richmond, Fredericksburg, Alexandria, and some other places on the rivers—none of which were more than large villages—became busy marts of trade. But all of these together made but a small part of the colony; the far larger, rural population was composed of many classes, from the great planter and slaveholder whose lands ex-



By courtesy of the Century Magazine

"WESTOVER" DOORWAY





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## SOCIAL LIFE

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tended around his ample home as far as eye could see, to the squatter on a few acres, in his one-room cabin. Much more numerous than either extreme was the farmer of the middle class living with no attempt at elegance, but in plenty, and supplied with every real necessity.

Social lines were closely drawn and were recognized by all classes, but there was never any iron-bound caste to forbid successful men from mounting the social ladder. Political democracy prevailed and the Virginian of all ranks was sturdily independent. In Northampton, in 1644, there was a quarrel between Captain William Stone, a magistrate—who had been high sheriff of the county and was later Governor of Maryland—and Mr. Peter Walker, a respectable citizen. The difficulty was taken to court and a witness testified that he had heard Mr. Walker say to Captain Stone:

“God’s wounds! I am as good a man as thee, and better too, better borne and better bredde.”<sup>1</sup>

The attitude was typical. Indeed, the life encouraged independence. Not only was the large or small planter’s house his castle, his plantation was his kingdom. He was a man in authority bidding his one slave or his hundreds of slaves and scores of white, indentured servants do his will. To these he was master, to his household he was the head—the authority from whom there was no appeal.

That the foundation of all social life is the family was never anywhere more fully illustrated than in Virginia. Distance between homes caused dependence of members of the household upon each other and made large families to be desired; the most fortunate parents were they that had the greatest number of children. Grandmothers enjoyed a position of honor, and other dependent relatives

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<sup>1</sup> Northampton County Records.

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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were welcome additions to the circle. If they were women they generally helped about the housekeeping, if men they found occupation enough in hunting and fishing; in either case they provided relief from loneliness. There was always plenty of food and plenty of firewood, and the more to enjoy them the merrier was the pleasant doctrine.

In 1686 William Fitzhugh wrote his brother in London:

“God Almighty hath been pleased to bless me with a good wife and five children and means to support them handsomely.” He had heard that his mother and sister were in straitened circumstances in the old country, and directed that his fortune be drawn upon to assist them “if it be to the utmost farthing.” In regard to his sister he said, “I should be heartily glad of her good company, with an assurance she shall never want as long as I have it to supply her,” and added, “I would desire and entreat you that she come out handsomely and genteely and well clothed, with a maid to wait on her and both their passages paid.”

In 1702 Samuel Griffin, of Northumberland County, directed in his will that his kinsman, Samuel Godwin, have “free accommodation” in his house for three years; and Robert Beverley, of “Newlands,” in his will made in 1733, directed that his three maiden sisters “have board and live” in his house after his death—as during his life—until marriage, “without charge or expense,” and gave them six pounds a year and the produce of their own slaves, who were to be permitted to work on his plantation.

If the presence of these and other “in-laws” made discord in colonial homes there is no proof of it.

Wills are a fruitful source of information as to relations between husbands and wives—careful provision for the wife with unqualified tributes to her good qualities being

the rule—and references of husbands and wives to each other and to their children in letters, diaries, and other records bear witness to the affection and confidence which generally characterized home life. Among the earliest of such testimonials is that given by John Rolfe, who, writing from Jamestown, in 1617, of his sorrow at the death of his wife, Pocahontas, expresses his great desire to have her infant son with him as soon as he is old enough to be brought from England, and speaks of the courage of the mother at the approach of death, "Saying all must die, but 'tis enough that her childe liveth."

Dr. John Pott was a popular physician of Jamestown, a member of his Majesty's Council and some time Governor, but his fondness for the cup that cheers got him into trouble. It was charged that while under its influence he branded other men's livestock as his own, and—though he stoutly denied it—he was tried and convicted of cattle stealing. Madam Elizabeth Pott made the long and dangerous voyage to England alone, in midwinter, to plead for him before the Privy Council, whose members were so impressed by her devotion that they sent her home with a pardon for her husband.

The records of Lower Norfolk furnish an instance of a widow's loyalty to her husband's memory and a quaint picture of manners, as well. Women of prominence were addressed as "Madam" while those of lower rank were called "Goody." Goody Layton told Madam Thoroughgood to her face that nobody could get a bill out of her late husband, Captain Adam Thoroughgood. The widow indignantly replied:

"Goody Layton, could you never get yours?"

"Yes," she admitted, and Madam Thoroughgood bade her bring another that could not. At which Goody Layton

“ turned about with a scornful manner and cried, ‘Pish.’ ”

Then said Madam Thoroughgood:

“ Goody Layton, you must not think to put it off with a ‘ pish,’ for if you have wronged him you must answer for it, for though he be dead I am here in his behalf to right him.”

She swore out a warrant and Goody Layton was ordered to ask her pardon kneeling, before the court and people present there, and again in the parish church after the first lesson at morning prayer, the next Sunday.

John Moon, of Isle of Wight County, in his will of 1655, thus appeals to his wife and children:

“ And for you my children, I charge you all before God and the Lord Jesus Christ who shall judge the Quick and the Dead that you demean yourselves loving, obedient, comfortable unto your Mother all the days of her life. And I charge you my beloved wife that you provoke not your children to wrath lest they be discouraged, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and live peaceably and lovingly together.”

Francis Page, of Williamsburg, in his will, 1692, directed that tombs to be erected over his “ dear wife ” and himself be left to the discretion of his “ honored Mother ” and his “ dear and loving brother.” He gave to his “ dear and only child ” all his estate and adds, “ I hereby commit her next to the blessing of God to the care, tuition and government of my honored Mother.”

In 1716 another of this family, Mann Page, of “ Rosewell,” wrote in his Bible:

“ On the 12th day of December (the most unfortunate day that ever befell me) about 7 of the clock in the morning, the better half of me, my dearest dear wife, was taken from me.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Page Family, 63, 143.



EVELYN BYRD



On the next day, December 13, 1716, we find Colonel Byrd writing from London to inform his brother-in-law, Colonel Custis, of the death of his first wife, his "dear Lucy" Parke. "Gracious God," he exclaims, "what pains did she take to make a voyage hither to seek a grave. No stranger ever met with more respect in a strange country than she had done here from many persons of distinction, who all pronounced her an honor to Virginia. Alas! how proud was I of her and how severely I am punished for it!"<sup>3</sup>

Richard Bray, in 1690, bequeathed most of his property to his wife, Ann, with the wish that after his death she would "go to England and live like a gentlewoman"; and Benjamin Harrison, disposing of a handsome estate in 1743, said:

"Forasmuch as my wife hath at all times behaved in a most dutiful and affectionate manner to me—always assisting me through my whole affairs, I therefore think proper to give my dear wife as a small requital over and above the thirds of my estate aforesaid. . . ." Handsome legacies follow—among them a coach and horses, a chariot, a gold watch, and jewels.

In a majority of wills the wife is left sole executrix, often without bond. For instance in 1669, the wealthy Edward Digges, of "Belfield," York County, who had been for some time in England, but was "now bound upon a voyage to Virginia," made his wife, Elizabeth, his executrix and gave her twelve hundred pounds sterling and all the rest of his estate except two hundred and fifty pounds each to his eight children. No wonder the lady sought repose in a "great bed" canopied with yellow silk!

Provision against a grasping successor was frequent. For instance, Major Robert Beverley, of Middlesex, in

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<sup>3</sup> Glenn's "Colonial Mansions," 34, 35.

1686, made his "deare and loving wife Catherine," full and sole executrix, "without security so long as she shall remain a widdow," but if she should marry or leave Virginia she was to give bond; while Daniel Gaines, in 1757, left his "beloved wife Eliza" his whole estate during her natural life or widowhood, but added:

"In case of my wife marrying, embezzling or squandering any part of my estate that is left to her, it shall be directly taken out of her hands to be taken care of for the use of my six children."<sup>4</sup>

In his "Progress to the Mines" Colonel Byrd—then married to his second wife, Maria Taylor, gives us some pleasant glimpses of himself and of Governor Spotswood—who married late in life—as family men. Leaving "Westover" on September 18, 1732, he says:

"For the pleasure of the good company of Mrs. Byrd and her little governor, my son, I went about half way to the Falls in the Chariot"—to which he drove six horses. This was about twenty miles; the rest of his journey was made on horseback.

Arrived at "Germanna," he "spent the evening prattling with the ladies—" Mrs. Spotswood and her sister Dorothea, or "Miss Theky," as she was called.

"I observed," he continues, "my old friend to be very uxorious and exceedingly fond of his children. This was so opposite to the maxims he used to preach up before he was married that I could not forbear rubbing up the memory of them. But he gave a very good-natured turn to his change of sentiments by alleging that whoever brings a poor gentlewoman into so solitary a place from all her friends and acquaintance would be ungrateful not to use her and all that belongs to her with all possible tenderness."

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<sup>4</sup> William and Mary Quarterly, v, 91.



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## SOCIAL LIFE

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Nearing home again, on October the ninth, the traveller writes:

“ My long absence made me long for the domestic delights of my own family, for the smiles of an affectionate wife and the prattle of my innocent children.”

Lord Adam Gordon, who visited Virginia in 1765 and recorded his impressions in his journal, said of the women that they made excellent wives and he had not heard of one unhappy couple.<sup>5</sup>

There were, of course, unsatisfactory husbands and wives—as there have always been, in every quarter. In 1625 Joseph Johnson was tried for wife-beating and put under a bond of forty pounds to keep the peace. In 1714 Mr. John Custis and his wife Frances had a quarrel that made necessary an agreement, now on file in Northampton County, in which it was ordered that—

“ Frances shall henceforth forbear to call him, ye said John, any vile names or give him any ill language, neither shall he give her any, but to live lovingly together and to behave themselves as a good husband and good wife ought to do and that she must not intermeddle with his affairs but that all business belonging to the husband’s management shall be solely transacted by him, neither shall he intermeddle in her domestic affairs but that all business properly belonging to the management of the wife shall be solely transacted by her.”

According to a deposition in the Lower Norfolk records of 1640:

“ Matthew Hayward’s wife did live as brave a life as any woman in Virginia, for she could lie abed any morning till her husband went amilking and came back again and washed the dishes and skimmed the milk and Mr. Edward

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<sup>5</sup> “ Travels in the American Colonies,” Mereness, 406.

Florde would come in and say, 'Come, neighbor, will you walk?'

"So they went abroad and left the children crying, that her husband was faine to come home and leave his work to quiet the children."

As there was no ecclesiastical court in Virginia there were no divorces, but there were a few legal separations, ordered by county courts. The *Virginia Gazette* of the middle and latter part of the eighteenth century contains occasional advertisements of deserted husbands warning the public against crediting their wives, and Colonel James Gordon's diary informs us that in 1763 Captain Glascock ran away from his wife and took a young woman with him.

But all of these are rare exceptions. There is abundant proof that Virginia was a land of happy marriages—of loving and trusting husbands and wives, surrounded by children who were objects of the utmost pride and devotion.

Robert Bolling, of "Kippax," concludes a Bible record of the births of his children thus:

"That God Almighty may bless these blessings shall be the continual prayer of their father."

William Beverley, writing of the death of a son in 1743, exclaimed, "Oh! that I had died in his room, for tho' I know I ought to submit in patience, yet my melancholy increases and I believe it won't be long before I lie in the dust with him who was the sweetest boy that ere was born."

Yet children were disciplined and especially were they made to obey. The commandment to honor their parents was drilled into them, and the maxim "spare the rod and spoil the child" was taken literally and followed faithfully. Politeness was considered of first importance, and parents, grandparents, teachers, and nurses all took a hand in train-

ing boys and girls to mind their manners. A gentleman of Middlesex, in making his will, cut his son off with a shilling "for some disrespect."

Colonel Daniel Parke, writing about 1702 to his daughter Frances, who afterward became Mrs. Custis—and for all her careful training fell out with her husband—admonishes her thus:

"Do not learn to romp but behave yourself soberly and like a gentlewoman. . . . Be calm and Obliging to all the Servants, and when you speak doe it mildly, even to the poorest slave; if any of the Servants commit small faults yt are of no consequence, doe you hide them. If you understand of any great faults they commit, acquaint yr mother, but do not exaggerate the fault."

Fithian declared that his pupils at "Nomini Hall" were more polite to the servants who waited on them than many ladies and gentlemen in his own colony were to each other.

Interesting pictures of domestic life are afforded by old letters and diaries and show the children of the long ago colonial days to have been very human little people. In 1728 Mrs. Thomas Jones, of Williamsburg, went to England in search of health, leaving her year-old baby, Dolly, two-year-old Tom, and seven-year-old Bessy Pratt—the child of an earlier marriage—to the care of her husband and mother. In a letter from the husband, who was still a lover, addressing her as "Dearest Life," and describing his state of desolation in her absence, he says of his little step-daughter:

"I asked her t'other day whether she would not rather live with somebody else than with me, but she told me she would not leave me to go to anybody or anywhere else, and you know she is a plain dealer and not afraid of incur-

ring my displeasure for anything she can say. She drinks your health very cheerfully every day after dinner. Upon a late visit she made to the Governor's Lady, passing through the Hall where the Governor, myself and several more were Setting, she behaved so very prettily that he cou'd not forbear taking particular notice of her. She also behaves very handsomely at Church and all public places, which I promised her to let you know." He says of Tom, " There is great prospect of his making a fine boy," and that Dolly is " as engaging as I think it possible for a child of her age to be."

The grandmother, Mrs. Holloway, writing her daughter, says that little Tom " has fallen in love with his maid Daffney. He kisses her and runs his head in her neck for w'ch he is never ye sweeter or cleaner, but you know children thrive on durt."

Of Bessy Pratt, the grandmother says, " she has made a pocket handkerchief (as prettily as you can work). She is now hem'g a neck handkerchief for me."

This delightful little girl's older brother, Keith Pratt, was at school in England, and here is a fascinating little letter from her to him, written when she was eleven years old:

Virginia, August 10th, 1732.

Dear Brother:

I was very glad to hear by both your letters to my Ma-ma that you was well; I wish there was not so much water betwixt us as I am told there is, I wou'd come to see you, tho' as it is I cou'd venture if my Ma-ma would come with me, and I shou'd think it the greatest Pleasure in the world; But as there is little hopes of that, I must be contented till you are big enough to come and see me, which I think will be more decent as I wear Petty-coats, but then you will see so many fine and agreeable Ladies every day that I'm afraid you will hardly think it worth while to come so far to see a Sister; so that perhaps I may never see you at all, which



A COLONIAL DOLL



MAMMY BY THE KITCHEN FIRE AT "GREENSPRING"



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## SOCIAL LIFE

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wou'd be a hard fate, only a Bro': and a Sister not to see one another so long as we live; but to be as perfect strangers, not to know each other tho' if by any accident (as they say) we were to meet in a dish: However, as we can both write, I shall always once or twice a year as opportunity offers let you know how I do, and I hope you will do the same. I find you have got the start of me in learning very much, for you write better already than I expect to do as long as I live; and you are got as far as the Rule of three in Arithmetick, but I can't cast up a sum in addition cleverly, but I am striving to do better every day. I can perform a great many dances and am now learning the Sibell, but I cannot speak a word of French. I fear you will think my letter too long, therefore shall only ad that all our Bros and Sisters that can speak give their love and Service to you, and be assured that I am

Your most affectionate Sister."<sup>6</sup>

A few samples from a fragment of a diary which has been preserved kept by small Sally Fairfax, in 1771 and 1772, will serve to show us another very lively little colonial girl:

"On thursday the 26th of decem. Mama made 6 Mince pies and 7 custards, 12 tarts, 1 chicking pye and 4 pudings for the ball."

"On Satterday the 28th of decem. I won 10 shillings of Mr. Wm. Payne playing chex."

"On Thursday 2d of Jan. 1772, Margery went to washing and brought all the things in ready done on Thursday the 9th of the same month. I think she was a great while about them, a whole week if you will believe me, reader."

"On Friday the 3d of Janna. that vile man Adam at night killed a poor cat of rage, because she eat a bit of meat out of his hand & scratched it. A vile wretch of New Negrows, if he was mine I would cut him to pieces, a son of a gun, a nice negrow, he should be killed himself by rites."

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<sup>6</sup> Jones Manuscripts—Library of Congress.

“ On Friday the 10th of Jan. Margery mended my quilt very good.”

“ On Saturday, the 11th of Jan. Papa measured me on the right side of the door, as you come out of the chamber.”

“ On Saturday, the 11th of Jan. I made me a card box to put my necklass in, & I put them in.”

“ On Thursday the 16th of Jan. there came a woman & a girl and Mama bought 3 old hens from them & gave them to me, which reduced the debt she owed me, which was 5 and nine-pence to three & nine-pence, which she now owes me, & she owes me fiveteen pence about Nancy Pereys ribon, which she never paid.”

Little Sally was the granddaughter of Colonel William Fairfax of “Belvoir” and daughter of Rev. Bryan Fairfax of “Toulston,” who was, in 1800, recognized by the House of Lords as the eighth Lord Fairfax. She died while still a young girl.

Colonial children, like children the world over, loved toys and games. Doubtless most of the toys of earliest times were home-made, but they had “store” toys too, for Williamsburg shops advertised them in the *Virginia Gazette*—tea-sets for little girls being especially mentioned. In 1734 a jointed doll was imported for Betty Carter, and in 1769 a runaway servant advertised in the *Gazette* had a toy watch in his pocket. In a pleasant letter to her sister, Mrs. George Braxton, of “Newington,” written about 1769, Anne Blair of Williamsburg tells of dressing a doll for her little sister Betsy. She has “had hair put on Miss Dolly,” but finds it not in her power to keep her promise to give her a silk sack and coat as the silk has been stolen from her trunk. “Little Betsy is busy making a tucker.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> William and Mary Quarterly, xxi.



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## SOCIAL LIFE

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Many of the quaint ring games, singing, kissing and counting-out games enjoyed by boys and girls of later days, with others, such as "blind man's bluff," "fox in the warner" (or warren), "prisoner's base," "cat," and "churmany"—as the old game of "rounders" was called here—were legacies from colonial children whose fathers and mothers played them in merry England and taught them to their sons and daughters in the big rooms and on the greenward of Virginia plantations. Shakespeare mentions prisoner's base, and Bunyan says that he was playing "cat" when he heard a voice from Heaven warning him of his sins.

Nothing could be further from the truth than the idea that the Colonial Virginia woman led a life of idleness. True she had plenty of servants to relieve her of manual work, even though her husband might be a man of moderate means, but the training and direction of these servants—white and black—the management of a large family and the superintendence of home industries made the position of mistress of a plantation one of importance and responsibility. It must be remembered that all of the sewing was done by hand and that most of the elaborate paraphernalia worn by men, women, and children and all of the clothing for the servants were made on the place; much spinning and weaving was done, many stockings were knitted. There was milk to be looked after, butter to be made and a quantity of pickles and preserves to be put up, and poultry and garden also came under the supervision of "the Mistress." Perchance her hair was brushed by one maid, her shoes laced by another, while still another fanned her when she sat down to read or sew, but at hog-killing time she assisted her husband in personally looking after the putting up of lard and sausage and curing of hams that were to grace her table.

Colonel Byrd says that when visiting the home of Major Woodford, of Caroline County, he "surprised Mrs. Woodford in her housewifery in the meathouse, at which she blushed as if it had been a sin."

There was often a home school taught by a tutor who was a member of the family; "the mistress"—and mother—must see that this was properly conducted and that the tutor's chamber, as well as the schoolroom, was comfortable.

In addition to all her other duties, she must have some knowledge of the care of the sick, for she practised, upon occasion, on both the white and black members of her family, in the house and in the "quarters." For these patients she not only made broth and gruel, but prepared teas, balms, and ointments from medicinal herbs grown in her garden, bandaged cuts and bruises, applied poultices and plasters, and administered emetics and purges.

Her badge of office was the key-basket carried on her wrist or placed upon her candle-stand or in some other handy place, filled with keys of every description from the little ones that unlocked the drawers of her sewing-table, "scrutoire," or linen press, to the ponderous ones whose grating in huge locks was *open sesame* to the cellar where provisions were kept cool and sweet, or the smoke-house from whose beams dangled row upon row of hams, jowls, and sides of bacon.

In the earliest settlements, and later on the frontier, the life of the housewife, if less varied in its responsibilities, was rougher and harder. She must understand the use of firearms and, in emergency, be both man and woman. In 1622, during the absence of John Proctor from his home—upon the southern side of James River, his wife, with her servants, bravely defended the house against the Indians. In 1710 the Commissioners to settle the boundary



RICHARD LEE  
About 1660



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line between Virginia and North Carolina passed the frontier house of Mr. Francis Jones who was away from home, but they were hospitably entertained by his wife and reported of her:

“She is a very civil woman and shews nothing of ruggedness, or Immodesty in her carriage, yett she will carry a gunn in the woods and kill deer, turkeys, &c., shoot down wild cattle, catch and tye hoggs, knock down beeves with an ax and perform the most manfull Exercises as well as most men in those parts.”<sup>8</sup>

This competent lady had several negro servants.

So much for the woman of comfortable circumstances. Those of poorer class who had no servants, and those of the mountain settlements, did their own cooking, washing, and housework, cared for their children, and not only made with their own needles all the clothing of the family, but wove the homespun cloth of which it was made. Kercheval tells us that in The Valley there was a loom in every house and almost every woman was a weaver.

Byrd in his “Journey to the Land of Eden,” in 1733, came to the “poor, dirty house” of one Daniel Taylor, “with hardly anything in it but children.” He says, “The woman did all that was done in the family and the few garments they had to cover their dirty hides were owing to her industry.”

The next day he went to Brunswick Church, in the neighborhood, and says:

“What women happened to be there were very gym and tidy in the work of their own hands, which made them look tempting in the Eyes of us Foresters.”

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<sup>8</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., v, 10.

II—HOSPITALITY

Early and late, east and west, the Colonial Virginia woman knew that she must be a good neighbor and an ever ready, always gracious hostess.

From the beginning of time, making the stranger welcome to roof and board has been an unwritten law in thinly settled rural communities, and so liberally observed was this law in his Majesty's first colony that at an early day in its history Virginia hospitality passed into a proverb. One of the first witnesses to this was the traveller, De Vries, who writing on March 11, 1632, says:

“At noon we came to Littleton, where we landed and where resided a great merchant named Mr. Menife, who kept us to dinner and treated us very well.”

In 1648 a writer calling himself Beauchamp Plantagenet said in an account of a visit to America that on reaching Virginia he came to Newport's News, where he received kind entertainment at the houses of Captain Matthews and Master Fauntleroy and “free quarter everywhere.”

Captain Matthews was a councillor and was afterward governor of the colony. Another traveller who enjoyed his hospitality has left a description of him, which, in a sentence, sums up the ideal of old Virginia character: “In a word, he keeps a good house, lives bravely and is a true lover of Virginia.”

The cordiality with which the Old Dominion received Cavalier refugees is an oft-told tale. Toward the end of 1649 three such visitors, Colonel Henry Norwood, Major Francis Moryson, and Major Richard Fox, landed in a storm on the Eastern Shore, were made welcome at the nearest plantation and heartily entertained on all sides. Stephen Charlton “would have the Colonel to put on a good farmer-like suit of his own.” A few days later they

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## SOCIAL LIFE

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sailed across to York River where, at Captain Ralph Wormeley's, they found several other Cavalier officers—Sir Thomas Lunsford, Sir Henry Chichley, Colonel Philip Honeywood, and Colonel Mainwaring Hammond—feasting and carousing. Colonel Norwood declared of Governor Berkeley's hospitality to Cavaliers, "house and purse were open to all such."

Writing of Virginia about 1700, Robert Beverley, the historian, says:

"The inhabitants are very courteous to travellers, who need no other recommendation but the being human creatures. A stranger has no more to do but to enquire upon the road where any gentleman or good housekeeper lives and there he may depend upon being received with hospitality. This good nature is so general among these people that the gentry when they go abroad order their principal servant to entertain all visitors with everything the plantation offers. And the poor planters who have but one bed will very often sit up or lie upon a form or couch all night to make room for a weary traveller to repose himself after his journey."

Says Hugh Jones, in his "Present State of Virginia," 1724: "No people can entertain their friends with better cheer and welcome, and strangers and travellers are here treated in the most free, plentiful and hospitable manner so that a few inns or ordinaries on the roads are sufficient."

Forty years later Lord Adam Gordon wrote in his "Journal":

"The inhabitants are courteous, polite and affable, the most hospitable and attentive to Strangers of any I have yet seen in America."

So much for the Virginians and the strangers within

their gates. Letters and diaries give more intimate pictures of them with their friends and relatives. Those of the upper class were like one big, scattered family, for they were almost all related either by blood or marriage, and closely connected in all their interests. The casual caller had often travelled a good distance, on horseback or in carriage, and was always offered immediate refreshment and not only invited, but urged, to spend the day and night and to stay as much longer as was agreeable to him, and he very often accepted—sometimes prolonging his visit for days. If he came alone this meant entertainment for himself and his horse only, but as likely as not he came in his coach, chariot, or chair, with anywhere from a pair to six horses, a driver and perhaps postilions and outriders and a maid or two to wait upon the family with which the equipage overflowed. In January, 1735, Sir John Randolph and his family had been making such a visit to the Byrds of "Westover," and upon their departure their host, who had done everything in his power to keep them longer, followed them with a letter to further assure them of his kind feeling. He wrote:

"Dear Sir:

"In hopes you may be safe at Williamsburg by this time and my lady up to the elbow in Sassaages & Black Puddings I can't forbear Greeting you well, and signifying our joy at your arrival in your own chimney-corner. We have had the good nature to be in pain for you ever since you left us, 'tho in good truth your obstinacy in exposing your wife and children to be Starved with cold and buried in the mire hardly deserved it."

A letter bearing date November 25, 1765, from William Byrd, the third, to his niece Maria Carter, of "Cleve," shows that "Westover" was keeping up its traditions of



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hospitality. After congratulating his "dear Molly" upon her engagement to William Armistead, of "Hesse," Gloucester County, the writer says:

"I & the rest of your relatives here beg the Favour of you & Mr. Armistead to spend your Christmas at Westover, where many young People are to make merry; & give our love to your Sisters & bring them with you. Our coach shall attend you anywhere at any time."

In the towns there was much tea-drinking and entertaining at meals. Here is an invitation sent to the charming widow Pratt and her sister by one of her admirers, a short time before she gave her hand to the adoring Thomas Jones, of Williamsburg:

Pleasant Madam,

The favor of your company with Mrs. Ann's will be very acceptable at Dinner, Supper and all other times to

Madam, Y'r most obliged Serv't

GRAVES PACKE.

May 23, 1725.

Queen's Creek.

The coming of a new Governor always stimulated sociability. On November 23, 1751, President John Blair of the Council recorded in his diary that he and Mrs. Blair dined, by invitation, at "Ye Attorney's with the newly arrived Governor Dinwiddie and his wife and daughters." and that "many ladies and gentlemen visited them in the afternoon."

On November 25 he writes: "The Governor, his lady and Miss Dinwiddie, Mr. Attorney and his lady, the Councillor and his lady dined and supped with us this day." And on December 31, "I invited the Governor and his family to begin the year with us tomorrow."

In 1769 President Blair's daughter, Anne, wrote her sister, Mrs. Braxton:

“ I am to drink tea at the Attorney’s; he breakfasted with us this morning. Tomorrow I breakfast with him at his Quarters and on Thursday he has bespoke some Firmaty at our lower plantation.”

Even the hospitable Virginian had too much company sometimes, though his training forbade him to acknowledge it save to his ever ready and supposedly safe confidant, his diary.

We cannot forbear hearty sympathy with Colonel James Gordon, of “Merry Point,” Lancaster County, a man of many affairs and with an ill son-in-law in his house, who has left the following record:

“ March 2, 1761. Mr. Hunt came soon after breakfast, and Captain Thornton, Captain Foushee and his wife, Colonel Tayloe and Armistead Churchill after dinner, so that we had the house full.”

“ March 3. So much company I can’t do any business.”

“ March 4. All the company went away after dinner.”

We can almost hear the sigh of relief with which this entry was made.

On March 29 he has had guests again—ten of them, who stayed several days. On March 30 all of these left, but the respite was brief, for on April 1 the record began again with “Armistead Churchill and his wife, Richard Span and his wife and baby arrived,” and continued thus:

“ 3. Our Company still with us, with the addition of Mr. Wormeley, his wife and daughter, which is rather troublesome at this time.

“ 4. It blowed so hard that our company could not get over the river.

“ 5. Our company all went off, tho’ we insisted upon their staying till tomorrow.”

Their ideal of hospitality and good breeding demanded



MRS. RICHARD LEE

About 1660



this insistence, no matter how inconvenient acceptance of the invitation might have been. On May 11 he wrote, "No company, *which is surprising*," but was soon to add,

"13. Mr. Wm. Churchill his wife and five children came, & Mrs. Carter & her son & Miss Judith Bassett.

"15. The Company all here yet."

On May 16, "Mr. Carter and Mr. Churchill & their families went away."<sup>9</sup>

It is evident that all of these visitors were uninvited and unexpected. No mention is made of the horses and servants they brought to be cared for on the plantation—they were doubtless taken as a matter of course.

Colonel Landon Carter of "Sabine Hall," made a regular practice of celebrating his birthday with what would be called to-day a house-party and recorded in his diary his enjoyment of these entertainments. On January 14, 1770, he writes of his sixtieth birthday feast:

"My annual entertainment began on Monday, the 8th, and held till Wednesday night, when except one individual or two that retired sooner things pleased me much, and therefore I will conclude that they gave the same satisfaction to others. The oysters lasted till the third day of the feast."

On January 22 he writes, "Colonel Fauntleroy's feast day, where I suppose my family must go."

On January 16, of the following year, he describes his birthday celebration with even greater gusto:

"From the 1st day of this month till this day we have had prodigious fine weather indeed, so that I have enjoyed my three days' festival, to wit: The 10, 11 & 12, with great cheerfulness to everybody; in all about 60 people of whom were Mr. Carter of Corotoman & his Lady, my

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<sup>9</sup> William and Mary Quarterly, xi, 219, 220.

nephew Charles Carter, late of Nanzaticoe, & his Lady, my nephew Fitzhugh, his Lady, Col. P. Lee, his Lady, & all my neighborhood except Col. Brockenbrough, although invited & really promised to come."

In 1774 he simply says:

"As it was my 64th birthday I received the compliments of most of my better sort of neighbors."

This constant and wholesale entertaining was made easy for the Virginians by the abundance of almost everything imaginable to eat—and drink—and the great number of negro cooks, whose natural turn for the culinary art developed into genius under the training of the planters' wives, with whom keeping a good table was a point of honor. The woods were full of game of every description, the rivers with fish, oysters, and crabs.

Hugh Jones, in his "Present State of Virginia," says that the frontier counties abounded with venison and wild turkeys and that though in the lower country venison was not so plentiful there was "enough and tolerably good."

Burnaby in his travels—1759-60—writes of the sora which, in season, "you meet with at tables of most of the planters, breakfast, dinner and supper." He adds: "In several parts of Virginia the ancient custom of eating meat at breakfast still continues. At the top of the table, where the lady of the house presides, there is constantly tea and coffee, but the rest of the table is garnished with roasted fowls, venison, game, and other dainties."

Every planter, in proportion to his means, made a garden, set out an orchard, and raised poultry and hogs, and the well-to-do raised also beeves and sheep. The settlers in The Valley had their patches of corn, cabbage, beans, and potatoes, and carried peach and apple trees on pack horses across the mountains. In 1745 one of these,

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Christopher Zimmerman, carried a hundred and thirty-seven apple trees a hundred and fifty miles and planted them on his tract on the upper James River.<sup>10</sup>

Peaches were especially plentiful. As early as 1691 William Fitzhugh, whose pride in his fruit trees was not exceptional, writes that his orchard gives him "from its loaden boughs, a promised assurance of future gratification."

The first comers to Jamestown learned from the Indians the many uses of corn. They and their successors ground it to make meal or crushed it to make hominy, and corn-bread not only became and remained throughout the period the staff of life to the poor-white and the negro slave, but was popular in the great house as well and was especially relished as the natural accompaniment of bacon and cabbage or "greens." Virginia-cured bacon early became famous, and "hog and hominy"—a homely but palatable combination—was a mainstay of the poorer people throughout the low country and in the mountains and was far from being despised by the prosperous.

To call Hugh Jones to the witness stand again, he says:

"They bake daily bread and cakes, eating too much hot and new bread which cannot be wholesome tho' it be pleasanter."

Smyth in his "Travels"—1774—describes the average planter in summertime as rising early, drinking a julep "made of rum, water and sugar, riding around the plantation viewing his stock and crops, and breakfasting about ten o'clock on cold turkey, cold meat, fried hominy, toast and cider, ham, bread and butter, tea, coffee and chocolate."

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<sup>10</sup> Chalkley's Augusta Co. Records, i, 431.

Colonel Byrd had toast and cider for breakfast at Major Woodford's.

All kinds of vegetables were grown in the gardens. In his diary President John Blair mentions dining at Colonel Burwell's in February and eating "fine greens that were planted about the first of September," having asparagus on his own table in March and green peas in September. He also says that he "gathered oranges at Greenspring"—grown under glass, of course—in March. Colonel Landon Carter tells of having at "Sabine Hall" a "great abundance of mushrooms."

As spices, almonds, raisins, and flavorings were imported by the planters, and during the eighteenth century were to be bought in the home stores, and the housewives had all the recipes that were in use in England, there was nothing in the way of making "good things." In 1738 the versatile Mrs. Stagg, dancer and actress, of Williamsburg, advertised in the *Virginia Gazette*, "Hartshorn and Calvesfoot jellies fresh every Tuesday," besides other confectionery, including "mackaroons, Savoy biscuits and Barbadoes sweetmeats."

Williamsburg druggists advertised "white and brown sugar candy," sugar plums, and comfits.

A prohibitionist in Colonial America would have been considered a lunatic. It was a drinking age. The Englishman or Scotchman made merry with his friends over the flowing bowl at his favorite inn or in his home in the old country, and when he crossed the sea he brought his convivial habits with him and passed them on to his children. Even Puritan and Quaker restraint did not extend to the cup, for court records exhibit no more proof of drunkenness in one colony than another. In Virginia a julep before





THE DINING ROOM AT "SHIRLEY"  
Showing portrait of Washington by Peale



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breakfast was believed to give protection against malaria, and a toddy, or a glass of wine, punch, or beer at almost any time of the day or night to be good for the body as well as cheering to the spirit and indispensable to the practice of hospitality.

Yet it was realized that drinking could be carried too far, and as early as January, 1643, steps were taken by the authorities to "prevent the importation of too great a quantity of strong liquors" into Virginia from neighboring colonies. In August of the same year an order of the Governor and Council was proclaimed in the courts reciting that "in accordance with the instructions of his Majesty against the excessive and scandalous importation of strong waters into the Colony," laws had been passed to prevent it, but had been evaded; and because the intemperance of certain persons was a "general scandal to the Colony and to temperate and continent men, no debts for wine imported nor for strong waters distilled and made in the Colony should be recoverable in any Court in the Colony."

A great part of our information in regard to drinking, gambling and other offences is derived from the records of county courts, and these show that juries faithfully and fearlessly performed their duty and indicted and convicted without respect to persons. There are instances of the indictment of magistrates themselves for being drunk.

The wines most freely used were Madeira and Fial, and in addition to these all kinds of French and other European wines—especially claret and port—were "plentifully drank by the better sort." In 1739 Richard Chapman in ordering half a pipe of good Madeira to be shipped to York River for him, wrote a London merchant that he found it impossible to keep house in Virginia "without a

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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little wine." In 1715 John Fontaine made a visit to Robert Beverley, the historian, at "Beverley Park." After breakfast they went out to see the vineyard and "were very merry" with the wine of his host's making, and "drank prosperity to the Vineyard."

The Virginians made a good deal of beer of the native persimmon and more still of molasses from which they brewed an "extraordinary brisk good tasting liquor at a cheap rate." They also made malt beer and imported Bristol beer which was consumed "in vast quantities."

Cider was always a favorite drink. The planters made great quantities of it from their own apples, and Virginia cider, like the Virginia ham and Virginia peach brandy, was often sent as a present to friends abroad. In a letter to a correspondent in Barbadoes in 1743 William Beverley sends thanks for a gift of rum and promises in return some "good white apple cider."

The fondness of the negroes for the cheap native drinks has been celebrated in the jingle,

Christmas comes but once a year;  
Every man must have his *sheer*  
Of apple cider'n 'simmon beer.

Wherever there was drinking there was toasting of royalties and other personages, as well as of friends far and near, and in many homes the custom of proposing toasts after dinner was as invariable as that of grace before meat. Philip Fithian alludes over and over again to its daily observance at "Nomini Hall," where each person at table, in turn, toasted some one he wished to compliment. The lovesick young tutor himself usually gave the name of some neighborhood belle, though he confided to his diary that in his heart he meant the faraway Laura. One day there dropped in to dinner at "Nomini" a plain man "who

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seemed unacquainted with company, for when he would at table drink our health, he held the glass fast with both hands, gave an insignificant nod to each one at the table, in haste and with fear, and then drank like an Ox. At the second toast, after having seen a little of our manner, he said, 'Gentlemen and ladies, the King,' but seemed better pleased with the liquor than with the manner in which he was at this time obliged to use it."

This inviting to his board of passers-by of all ranks was one of the many indications that in the vocabulary of the Virginian there was no such word as snob.

On another occasion Fithian says:

"Breakfasted with us a gentleman from Maryland. At dinner he was joined by another from the same province. They are both unknown."

John Harrower, an indentured servant, from Shetland, bound to Colonel William Daingerfield, of Spotsylvania County, for four years, to teach his three small children reading, writing, and arithmetic, tells in his diary of the gracious terms upon which he lived at "Belvidera." One day he asked his master for a bottle of rum to treat two of his fellow-countrymen who were coming to see him. The Colonel gave it "very cheerfully" and told him to ask for another whenever he wanted it and to bring his two friends to the great house to dinner.

Transportation was a most important factor in the exchange of hospitality between the scattered plantations. Dwellers along the rivers frequently called upon each other in sail or row boats, as did the Carters of "Nomini," who not only made visits, but sometimes went to church, in a boat rowed by four negro men. But most of the going about was done on horseback or in carriages. Everybody

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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that had anything had something to ride—from the “one old poore mangy, scabby horse” in the inventory of Grace Sherwood, the witch, to the stables filled with highly bred horses of the rich planter.

During most of the seventeenth century—and later in the upper country—when the roads were mere bridle-paths, almost all travel by men and women was done on horseback. A wife often rode behind her husband, on a pillion, but many women had good horses and saddles of their own, and a riding horse was a frequent legacy to either man or woman.

The first mention I have seen of a carriage of any description in Virginia is in 1677, when the Commissioners sent by the English government to suppress Bacon’s Rebellion complained that when Sir William Berkeley sent them in his coach from his seat, “Greenspring,” to the wharf, he insulted them by having the “common hangman” to act as postilion. Governor Berkeley declared that he was as innocent of such a thing “as the blessed angels themselves,” but the charge has served to put him on record as the first man in Virginia known to have had a coach.

In 1701 William Fitzhugh bequeathed to his wife and son two coaches.

Hugh Jones, in 1724, says, “most people of any note in Williamsburg have a Coach, Chariot, Berlin or Chaise.” And an anonymous writer in the *London Magazine*, describing his travels in America in 1746, tells us that he was struck by “the prodigious Number of Coaches that crowd the deep, sandy Streets of this little City,” and that in Yorktown “almost every considerable man keeps an equipage, tho’ they have no concern about the different colors of their horses.”

Says the *Virginia Gazette* of July 13, 1749:

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“ This day the Hon. John Robinson, Presid't. and the rest of the Gent. of the Council went all in Coaches to wait on the Gov'r.”

In 1756 William Stephens, a newcomer to the colony, wrote to Nathaniel Philips, of London:

“ If a man keeps his Coach the coachman, postilion and footman are all blacks. They all drive with six horses.”

Lord Adam Gordon, writing of the people he had met in eastern Virginia, in 1764, says:

“ Their Breed of Horses is extremely good, and particularly those they run in their Carriages. . . . They all drive six horses and travel generally from 8 to 9 miles an hour—going frequently sixty miles to dinner—You may conclude from this their Roads are extremely good. They live in such good agreement that the Ferries, which would retard in another Country, rather accelerate their meeting here, for they assist one another and all Strangers with their Equipages in So easy and kind a manner, as must deeply touch a person of any feeling and convince them that in this Country Hospitality is everywhere practised.”

Naturally, the acquaintance of a visiting lord would have been among the prominent and prosperous. It is impossible to say what proportion of these drove a coach and six. Many did, but many also drove a coach, or chariot, and four horses, many others a chair, or chaise, and pair.

I find among my own notes mention of about eighty owners of coaches and chariots for four or six horses, and could quote besides many wills like that of Moore Fauntleroy, of Richmond County, who, in 1739, left his wife his “ chariot and horses ” without indicating whether the harness was for four or six.

Of course I do not pretend to have examined all the records now in Virginia, to say nothing of the many which

have been destroyed. There was a still larger number of small carriages—chairs, chaises, calashes, and phaetons; and there was the poor man's carriage—the ox-cart. A good number of gentlemen had several pleasure vehicles, among them Governor Spotswood, whose inventory shows that he left, in 1740, a coach, chariot, and chaise; Benjamin Harrison of "Berkeley," who, in 1743, bequeathed his wife his coach, chariot, chair, and six horses; Philip Lightfoot, of Yorktown, who left in 1748 a two-wheeled chair, a four-wheeled chair, and a coach and six; Wilson Cary, who in his will of 1772 gave his "dear wife Sarah" a coach, post-chariot and horses, and a chair; and John Tayloe, of "Mt. Airy," who in 1773 bequeathed to his wife not only a coach and a chariot and six horses, but "their drivers."

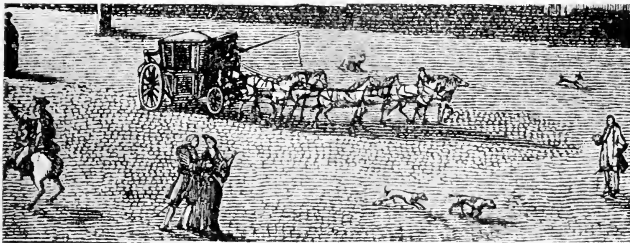
While the wife almost always fell heir to her husband's carriages and horses, a will sometimes provided that a child should ride in state. For instance, in 1742 William Randolph bequeathed his daughter Mary his "new chaise and harness for six horses, together with six horses of her own choosing." And in 1767 Willoughby Newton, of Westmoreland, gave his daughter Elizabeth his "coach and four horses."

Colonel Landon Carter makes frequent mention of his coach and six in his diary. On March 15, 1770, he writes that the weather is bad, but his daughter and her Cousin Nancy Beale insist upon going in the chariot to visit Nancy's mother forty miles off, in Lancaster County. Fithian tells of the arrival at "Nomini" of "our new coach," which he says is "a plain carriage, the upper part black and the lower sage or pea green." It cost a hundred and twenty pounds sterling. Councillor Carter had also a "strong, fashionable, travelling post coach, lined with blue morocco," a "chariot with six wheels," and a





WASHINGTON'S PUNCH BOWL



A COACH AND SIX



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chair. His coachman and postilions wore livery of blue broadcloth with brass buttons.<sup>11</sup>

Let us see Philip Fithian going a-visiting with the "Nomini" family. Mrs. Carter invited him to escort her when she called upon the rector of the parish, and the "Councillor" lent him his own "beautiful grey riding horse." They set out about ten o'clock, Mrs. Carter and her daughters Prissy, Fanny, and Betsy in the chariot, Bob and Mr. Fithian on horseback. There were also "three waiting men—a coachman, driver and postilion." They arrived at the rectory at a little after twelve and found Mr. Smith away from home, but his wife and sister entertained them, and they stayed to dinner. Imagine a party of six with three servants and certainly six, probably eight, horses descending unexpectedly upon a parson's wife and staying to dinner! It is to be hoped the Old Virginia custom of stocking the parson's larder with bacon, poultry, and vegetables was observed in that neighborhood.

In 1739 Samuel Bowler, coachmaker, from London, settled in Williamsburg and advertised in the *Gazette* that he was prepared to "serve Gentlemen in making and repairing coaches, chariots, chaises and chairs, and harness for them." In 1753 a second-hand chariot was sent from London to Francis Jerdone, a Yorktown merchant, for sale. Jerdone wrote the owner that he had sold it for forty-three pounds sterling—the most he could get for it—and adds:

"Second hand goods are no way saleable here, for our Gentry have such proud spirits that nothing will go down but equipages of the nicest and newest fashions. You will not believe it when I tell you that there are sundry chariots

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<sup>11</sup> Glenn's "Colonial Mansions," 271.

now in the country which cost 200 guineas and one that cost 260.”<sup>12</sup>

Immediately after the death of William Nelson, of Yorktown, in 1773, his widow ordered from London “a genteel chariot with six harness, to be painted a grave color, and the coat of arms of our family, the whole to cost about £100 sterling.”

The carriage door or harness was a favorite place for displaying coats-of-arms, which were used by a great number of the more prominent families, but not all. Other ways of making use of them were on seals, silver-plate, rings, tombs, book-plates, snuff-boxes, painted for framing, and on hatchments—tablets with the armorial bearings of deceased persons which were hung in front of houses at the time of funerals. Funeral hatchments seem to have rarely been preserved, for the only ones now known to be in Virginia are two at “Shirley.” Occasionally, arms were carved upon front doors—as those of the Lee family on the door at old “Cobbs,” in Northumberland County.

Sometimes a militia officer would have his coat-of-arms painted on his drum. In the inventory of Colonel William Farrar, of Henrico, 1677, the appraisers name “one new drum wee think fitt to leave to the heir, it belonging to ye family as by ye arms thereupon appears.”

Among the comparatively few original papers which remain in the files of the older counties may still be found many with armorial seals. For instance, there is the fine Isham seal at Henrico, that attached to the will of Major Robert Beverley, in Middlesex, and the excellent impression of the Filmer arms on a paper now in the collection of the Virginia Historical Society. To quote a few of the great number of references to arms on rings, Leonard

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<sup>12</sup> William and Mary Quarterly, xi, 238.

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Howson, of Northumberland, in 1704, bequeathed to Elizabeth Brereton "a small gold seal ring with her grandfather Brereton's Coat of Arms." In 1711 Samuel Peachey, of Richmond County, mentioned in his will his "great silver tankard and sealed gold ring"—both having his coat-of-arms upon them; in 1740, George Turberville, of Westmoreland, left his son John his gold seal ring, with his coat-of-arms; and in 1761 George Lee left his son Launcelot "a seal set in gold with the family Coat of Arms cut thereon, which was given me by my friend Colonel Richard Lee."

Sixty-four armorial book-plates are known to me, and there are doubtless others.

Notwithstanding the fact that tombstones had to be imported from England and that many old ones have been destroyed, there were within recent years in Virginia churchyards and family burying grounds—and most of them still remain—at least a hundred and sixteen tombs of the colonial period bearing arms.

Both the Father of his Country and the democratic author of the Declaration of Independence were interested in coats-of-arms. In 1771 Washington wrote to London from Mt. Vernon, ordering his crest engraved on two seals—one to be "topaz or some other handsome stone" and the other "a plain stone"—and in the same year Jefferson wrote from Monticello to Thomas Adams, merchant, of London:

"One farther request and I am done, to search the Herald's office for the Arms of my family. I have what I have been old were the family Arms, but on what authority I know not, it is probable there may be none, if so I would with your assistance become a purchaser, having Sterne's word for it that a coat-of-arms may be purchased as cheap as any other coat."

III—FESTIVITIES

AMONG other things brought by the Virginians from England was love of pleasure which asserted itself as soon as the hardships of settlement days and the terrors of the massacres were behind them. Firearms played an important part in their life, not only for protection from the Indians, but for giving dash to their frolics, and it was easy enough to provide this when every man carried a gun upon all occasions; for during the times of the red-skin menace preparedness was, in effect if not in name, the watchword of the colonist. It was against the law for a man to go to church unarmed, and in 1626 the Governor and Council ordered that no man work in the fields without arms and an armed sentinel to keep watch.

The first suggestion of merry-making in my notes is a proclamation, issued in 1627, against "spending powder at meetings, drinkings, marriages and entertainments," because a war with the Indians was expected. On October 23, 1719, being the anniversary of the coronation of his Majesty George I, a negro slave, named Priemus, "had his right arm shot off in firing the great guns in Williamsburg," and as late as 1773 Philip Fithian, the tutor, was aroused from his slumbers at "Nomini Hall" on Christmas morning by "guns fired all around the house."

White and colored in the colony loved anniversaries and festivals. Francis Louis Michel, who wrote an account of his "Journey" from Switzerland to Virginia, in 1701, says that harvest time was one of the principal seasons of festivity and that it was the "custom of the country" when the harvest was ready to be gathered in to prepare a big dinner and invite all the neighbors. As there were often thirty to fifty persons cutting grain, the work would

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last only two hours. The rest of the day was, of course, given up to jollity.<sup>13</sup>

A similar festival for the negroes, which was held throughout Virginia until the War between the States and doubtless began far back in the colonial period, was the corn-shucking. For this, moonlight nights in October were chosen. The negroes of a neighborhood gathered at each plantation in turn, where plenty to eat and drink was provided, and, with laughter and song, antics and buffoonery which would make a modern minstrel show appear tame, would in a few hours' time shuck out the crop of corn which had been cut and gathered in the barn ready for the frolic.

Let us see Mr. Blair, the honorable President of his Majesty's Council, making holiday. According to his diary, on January 8, 1751—the fourteenth day after Christmas—he “Dined at Col. Burwell's & staid all night & danced & drew 14th cake.” On January 11 he “Had a dance & cake at Mr. Cocke's,” and on February 2 spent “a good Candlemas day. Had Company from ye College.”

St. Andrew's Day and Shrove Tuesday—or “Pancake Day”—were other popular merry-making occasions. Colonel James Gordon, of “Merry Point,” tells how his wife visited Mr. Criswell's school in the neighborhood, in 1758, and “treated the scholars to pancakes and cider, it being Shrove Tuesday, & prevailed on Mr. Criswell to give them play.”

On New Year's Day, 1762, Colonel Gordon “had a large company” at “Merry Point,” and on “Twelfth Day” Mrs. Conway and her children, Colonel Tayloe, and Dale Carter dined and spent the night with him and his family.

Fithian speaks of Good Friday as a “general holiday,”

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<sup>13</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., xxiv, 32.

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and writing on Easter Monday says, "The negroes are now all disbanded 'till Wednesday Morning & are at Cock fights through the country."

The birthdays of members of the royal family were special holidays in the loyal colony, especially in Williamsburg, as the local columns of the *Virginia Gazette* show. For instance, in 1736 the birthday of the Prince of Wales was celebrated by "firing of guns, displaying of colors and other public demonstrations of joy, and at night his Honor, the Governor, gave a ball and an elegant entertainment to the ladies and gentlemen."

The King's birthday, a few months later, was celebrated in like fashion, while upon the night of his Majesty's birthday in 1752 "the whole city was illuminated" and there was a ball at the "Palace," where were present "the Emperor and Empress of the Cherokee's Nation with their Son, the young Prince, and a brilliant appearance of Ladies and Gentlemen. Several beautiful Fireworks were exhibited in Palace Street by Mr. Hallam, Manager of the Theatre in this City, and the evening concluded with every Demonstration of our Zeal and Loyalty."

Upon another occasion the President of the Council kept "the birthday" in an "extra manner, by adding to his elegant entertainment for the ladies and gentlemen a purse of fifty pistoles to be distributed amongst the poor."

In 1769, on the Queen's birthday, the "flag was displayed on the Capitol and in the evening his Excellency, the Governor, gave a splendid ball and entertainment at the Palace to a very numerous and polite company of ladies and gentlemen."

The proclamation of a new sovereign was an occasion of even greater festivity than a royal birthday. The staunchly protestant and liberty-loving Virginians hailed





THE LEE ARMS  
 A wood-carving formerly on the front door at "Caldes,"  
 Northumberland County



By courtesy of the Century Magazine  
 ARMORIAL TOMB OF EDWARD HILL, AT  
 "SHIRLEY"



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with delight the accession of William and Mary. We find among the records of Henrico County an account of a meeting held at Varina, "where were present the Commissioned Officers of the County, civil and military, the settled militia thereof and other inhabitants, when their royal Majesties William and Mary were proclaimed with firing of guns, beating of drum, Sound of trumpet and ye universal Shouts and Huzzahs of ye people assembled."

Much more elaborate ceremonies, at Williamsburg, commemorated the death of William and the accession of Anne. On the 18th of May, 1702, the Governor called together the militia of the six nearest counties, and representatives from the Indians. Three stands were erected in front of the College, two batteries were placed, and the troops—horse and foot—were drawn up in line to the number of about two thousand. In the upper balcony of the College were buglers from the warships, in the second oboes, in the lower violinists, which at times played separately and at times together. When the proclamation of the king's death was to be made they played "very movingly and mournfully." The flags were covered with crape and borne by men in mourning, and the Governor followed on a white horse draped with black. Dr. James Blair delivered a funeral oration, and after it the Governor withdrew, but returned in a little while dressed in a blue uniform trimmed with gold braid. The musicians now played a lively air, flags were undraped, the accession of Queen Anne was proclaimed, and a salute from small arms and cannon fired.

The Governor then entertained all of the prominent people "right royally," and "each ordinary person was given a glass of rum or brandy." That night there were

fireworks and the next day shooting matches and more military manœuvres.

The arrival of a new governor, the election of a mayor, every propitious event was an excuse for merry-making. Says the *Gazette* of June 20, 1766:

“ Our gratitude and thankfulness upon the joyful occasion of the repeal of the Stamp Act and the universal pleasure and satisfaction it gives that all differences between the Mother Country and her Colonies are so happily terminated was manifested here by general illuminations and a ball and elegant entertainment at the Capitol, at which was present his Honor the Governor, many of the members of his Majesty’s Council and a large and genteel Company of Ladies and Gentlemen who spent the evening with much mirth and decorum, and drank all the loyal and patriotic toasts.”

John Kello, in a letter to London from Hampton, Virginia, in 1755, declared, “ Dancing is the chief diversion here, and hunting and racing,” and the English traveller Burnaby said of the women, “ They are inordinately fond of dancing, and indeed it is almost their only amusement.” He ungallantly added, “ in this they discover great want of taste and elegance and seldom appear with the grace and ease which those movements are so calculated to display.”

There is abundant evidence that dancing was by far the most generally popular amusement in the colony. Wherever there was “ company ” there was dancing. Everybody danced. Girls and boys, men and women capered fantastically in jigs and reels, stepped forward and back and turned their partners in the picturesque country dances—later known as square dances, or quadrilles—tripped

through the rollicking and immensely popular Sir Roger de Coverley—which under the name of the “Virginia reel” was the last dance at every ball until long after the War between the States—or courtesied low to each other in the rhythmic minuet.

Indeed “company” was not necessary where nearly every family was large enough for an impromptu dance, and probably as great a proportion of them as now have phonographs could boast of negro fiddlers who could “call figures.”

Fithian tells how one night after supper at “Nomini” “the waiting man played and the young ladies spent the evening merrily in dancing.”

Burnaby thought that the jigs were borrowed from the negroes, but he was mistaken. The negroes had, and still have, grotesque dances of their own, but it is much more likely that they got their quaint jigs from the white people whose forefathers had danced them time out of mind in the old country. Here is Burnaby’s description of jigs:

“These dances are without any method or regularity. A gentleman and lady stand up and dance about the room, one of them retiring, the other pursuing, then perhaps meeting, in an irregular, fantastic manner. After some time another lady gets up and the first lady must sit down, she being, as they term it, cut out; the second lady acts the same part which the first one did till somebody cuts her out. The gentlemen perform the same manner.”

In 1762 Charles Carter of “Cleve,” in King George County, directed in his will that his sons be sent to England to be educated and his daughters “brought up frugally and taught to dance.”

Learning to dance was considered an important part of education in the colony, and throughout the eighteenth

century there were plenty of professional dancing teachers—men and women. In 1716 permission was given William Levingston to use a room in William and Mary College “for teaching the students and others to dance until his own dancing school in Williamsburg be finished.”

The Williamsburg players, Charles Stagg and his wife, supplemented their income by teaching dancing and giving balls and “assemblies,” and after her husband’s death Mistress Stagg continued in the business, with, for rival, another widow, Madame la Baronne de Graffenreidt, whose husband, Christopher de Graffenreidt, of Berne, Switzerland, had brought a colony of Swiss and Palatines to North Carolina in 1709.

In 1735 Colonel Byrd, writing to Sir John Randolph that Madame la Baronne was hoping to succeed to part of Mr. Stagg’s business, said:

“Were it not for making my good Lady jealous (which I would not do for the world) I would recommend her to your favor. She really takes abundance of pains and teaches well, and were you to attack her virtue you would find her as chaste as Lucretia.”

Between them these ladies evidently made the little capital very gay, for advertisements in the *Gazette* show that their entertainments were frequent and varied. Madame de Graffenreidt announced a ball on the 26th of April, 1737, and an assembly on the 27th—for both of which tickets could be purchased “out at her house.” On the 28th and 29th of the same month Mrs. Stagg gave assemblies, “at the Capitol,” where tickets were “half a pistole,” and there were “several valuable things to be raffled for.” In March, 1738, Mrs. Stagg advertised an assembly at the Capitol when “several grotesque dances never yet performed in Virginia” were promised, some

valuable goods would be put up to be raffled for, and "also a likely young negro fellow."

Not to be outdone, Madame de Graffenreidt announced for a few days later a ball at which would be put up to be raffled for "a likely young Virginia negro woman fit for house business, and her child."

"Queer people!" I hear the reader say. A more fitting comment would be "queer times!"

The ladies had another rival in William Dering, who advertised in 1737 that he could teach "all gentleman's sons" to dance "in the newest French manner."

In the *Gazette* also appear references to frequent public balls at the house of Mrs. Shields, the daughter of a French Huguenot who kept a tavern in Williamsburg, and the wife successively, of three husbands, the earliest of whom was the first Grammar Master of William and Mary, the other two tavern-keepers of Williamsburg. Both Madame de Graffenreidt and Mrs. Shields have descendants among prominent Virginia families of to-day.

Among later Williamsburg dancing teachers was Le Chevalier de Peyronny who, in 1752, advertised in the *Gazette* for pupils in "the art of Fencing, Dancing and the French Tongue." In the same year Alexander Finnie announced that he proposed to have "a Ball at the Apollo, in Williamsburg once every week during the Sitting of the Assembly and General Court."

In 1750 Edward Dial advertised in the *Gazette* that he would have an Assembly at his dwelling house, in Norfolk.

George Washington came naturally by a taste for dancing. In 1754 his friend Daniel Campbell wrote him of having "lately had the honor to dance" with his mother, who was then a widow of forty-six and a grandmother. Among balls in various places which her famous son's diary

shows that he attended was one in Alexandria, in 1760, where he says "abounded great plenty of bread and butter, some biscuits with tea and coffee which the drinkers of could not distinguish from hot water sweetened. Be it remembered that pocket handkerchiefs served the purposes of tablecloths and napkins and that no apologies were made for either. I shall therefore distinguish this ball by the style and title of the bread and butter ball."

Kercheval tells us that even in The Valley, which was settled chiefly by Scotch-Irish and Germans who are supposed to have had stricter ideas in regard to worldly pleasures, dancing three and four-handed reels and jigs was the principal amusement of the young people. They also had a dance called "the Irish trot" from which it seems that the word *trot* as the name for a dance is not so modern after all. The Augusta Records bear witness that in 1763 there were at least two dancing masters in that mountain county—Ephraim Hubbard and James Robinson, by name.

From the seventeen-fifties to the seventeen-seventies there was in the colony a celebrated dancing master named Christian who went about holding classes in country neighborhoods. About the earliest mention of him is in 1758 when he was paid twenty pounds for teaching his art to Priscilla and Mary Rootes, of King and Queen County. In 1773 he had classes at several houses in Westmoreland and the neighboring counties, among them "Stratford" and "Nomini Hall," and Fithian's diary gives us a lively picture of the one at "Nomini." The pupils arrived early Friday morning and Fithian gave his own school holiday. There were present eleven "young misses" wonderfully arrayed, seven "young fellows," and several older people. Under Mr. Christian's direction they danced most of that day and the next. First there were "several minuets



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danced with great ease and propriety, after which the whole company joined in country dances," and the tutor decided that "it was indeed beautiful to admiration to see such a number of young persons set off by dress to the best advantage moving easily to the sound of well performed music."

The lesson continued from immediately after breakfast until two o'clock, when there was a rest until dinner, which was served at half-past three. Soon afterward, all "repaired to the dancing room again" and kept it up until dusk, when there was another brief rest; but they were on with the dance again from half-past six until half-past seven, when Mr. Christian withdrew and the company "played Button to get pawns for redemption" until the half-past eight supper time. The scruples created by early training had restrained the straight-laced Presbyterian tutor from taking part in the dancing, though being but human, and young at that, he could not help enjoying looking on, but he joined in the game of "button" and complacently remarks, "In redeeming my pawns I had several kisses of the ladies." He continues:

"The supper room looked luminous and splendid; four very large candles burning on the table where we supped; three others in different parts of the room; and a gay, sociable assembly, & four well instructed waiters. After supper the company formed into a semicircle around the fire & Mr. Lee was chosen Pope, Mr. Carter, Mr. Christian, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Lee and the rest of the company appointed friars in the play called Break the Pope's Neck."

In an entry in his diary in 1774 Colonel Landon Carter, of "Sabine Hall," rejoices that Christian has stopped his dancing classes in the neighborhood, as the schoolboys lost two days in every three weeks.

Fithian also tells of a ball given in January, 1773, by "Squire" Richard Lee—then a bachelor—of "Lee Hall," a few miles from "Nomini." It lasted four days—from Monday morning until Thursday night—when the "upwards of seventy" guests, "quite wearied out," departed, though their host "entreated them to stay longer." "Mrs. Carter, Miss Prissy and Miss Nancy, dressed splendidly, set away from home at two on Monday." They returned on Tuesday night, but were off to "Lee Hall" in time for dinner again on Wednesday, taking Mr. Fithian with them. "The ladies dined first, when some good order was preserved; when they rose each nimblest fellow dined first." The dinner was "as elegant as could be expected when so great an assembly was entertained for so long a time." The drinkables served were several sorts of wine, lemon punch, toddy, cider, and porter. At about seven the ladies and gentlemen began to dance in the ballroom to the music of a French horn and two violins. First there was a minuet; jigs followed, then reels, and last of all "country dances with occasional marches."

Fithian was a fascinated observer of it all, but his knowledge of dances was limited; a country dance with occasional marches was doubtless the Sir Roger de Coverley—or Virginia reel.

"The ladies were dressed gay and splendid & when dancing their skirts & Brocades rustled and trailed behind them." But all did not dance. There were parties in other rooms—evidently of men—some of whom were "at cards, some drinking, some toasting the sons of America and singing Liberty Songs." One of these who was rather the worse for his own part in the merry-making, noticing that the gentleman from Princeton neither danced, drank, nor



GOVERNOR SIR WILLIAM BERKELEY  
About 1665



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played, more pointedly than politely asked him why he came to the party.

A hundred years before Fithian made his sprightly word-pictures of life at "Nomini," "Stratford," and "Lee Hall," in old Westmoreland County, the neighborhood was a social one.

There is on record in the county a quaint "agreement" between Mr. Corbin, Mr. Lee, Mr. Gerrard, and Mr. Allerton, made in 1670. These four gentlemen were "for the continuance of good neighborhood," to build a banqueting house in which "each man or his heirs" in turn, had to make "an Honorable treatment fit to entertain the undertakers thereof, their wives, mistresses & friends, yearly & every year."

IV—GAMING—TAVERNS—FAIRS, ET CETERA

The Colonial age was a gambling age, and in Virginia, as in Great Britain and the other colonies, men of all ranks caught the infection. In addition to the betting at horse races and cock fights, almost every kind of game became, upon occasion, a gambling game. A few characteristic items from a mass of evidence will serve as illustrations.

In 1646 John Bradshaw and Richard Smyth, of Lower Norfolk County, were fined a hundred pounds of tobacco for "unlawful gaming at cards." The Henrico County records of 1681 show us Mr. Thomas Cocke, Jr., a gentleman of prominence, playing ninepins "at the ordinary" at Varina, with Richard Rathbone and Robert Sharpe—"the first four games to win, 31 up"—for four hundred pounds of tobacco, and in the following year we find him playing again with Sharpe for a hundred pounds of tobacco a game. In 1682 "Mr. Pygott," also of Henrico, won seven hundred pounds of tobacco from Martin Elam and John Milner at a game of "Cross and pile," and in 1685 Giles Carter won five hundred pounds of tobacco from Charles Steward at a game of dice, and Captain William Soane fifteen pounds of tobacco from Mr. William Dearlove at a game of "putt."

Taverns and inns—or "ordinaries" as they were most commonly called—where there were billiard tables and bowling alleys, were favorite places for indulging the gambling rage. George Fisher says in his diary that during his horseback ride from Williamsburg to Philadelphia he passed Chiswell's ordinary, in Hanover County, at about eight o'clock in the morning, and that in the room he entered two planters were "at cards." "Something after ten" he reached "Ashleys," where he saw "a number of planters at ninepins," and at Mills' ordinary, which he passed at

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three o'clock, there "were likewise a great number of people at ninepins."

At the Augusta County Court, in 1762, several persons swore that they saw John Boyers, Gentleman, "gaming at an unlawful game called hazard, or seven and eleven, at the house of Francis Tyler, ordinary keeper in Staunton" Another game played at Tyler's ordinary was called "pass and no pass."

According to the "Recollections" of David Meade, William Byrd, the third, of "Westover," the only son of his distinguished father, went to England before he was of age and there engaged in "all the prodigalities and dissipations to which young men of rank and fashion are addicted," but he gambled "as a fashionable amusement merely—avarice being a passion alien to his breast."

Virginia gossip said that at a noted gaming table in London this young gentleman lost ten thousand pounds sterling at a single sitting to the Duke of Cumberland. The memorandum book of President John Blair of the honorable Council shows that he, in 1753, won of young Byrd £19.7 at "Westover," and £192.8.6 at Williamsburg.

Mr. Blair also won money of Mr. Armistead Burwell; £17.3 of Mr. Sackville Brewer, and £1.10—"at backgammon"—of Mr. Burwell Bassett, and lost £17.3 to Mr. Thomas Swann, "at billiards."

All of these were gentlemen of "quality."

In 1772 Colonel Landon Carter, suspecting that his young sons had been at the gaming table, confided to his diary, "Burn me, if I pay anything more for such sport."

Apropos of taverns a quaint writer of the time of Bacon's Rebellion said that most of the inhabitants of

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Jamestown made a living "keeping ordinaries at extraordinary rates." The number of visitors constantly coming to the little town by ship and over land doubtless made tavern-keeping a brisk business, but the charges were fixed by law. Here is a list of rates from the Middlesex records of 1770:

Pursuant to Law the Court doth set the following Rates and Prices for Liquors, Diet, Lodging, Provender, Stableage, Fodder and Pasturage to be paid at the several Ordinaries in this County for the

	£	S	D
Canary Wine or Mallaga, the quart		4	
Sherry, the quart		3	
Madeira Wine the quart		4	
Claret the quart		5	
White wine the quart		3	
Rhenish the quart	1.		6
Nants or French Brandy the gallon	16		
Rum the gallon	10		
English or Virginia Brandy the Gallon	6		
A quart of Arrack made into punch	10		
A pint of rum made into punch with white sugar	1.		6
A quart of Madeira Wine made into Sangaree or lemonade with the same .....	4.		6
A pint of English or Va. Brandy made into punch with the same .....	1		
English strong beer or ale, the bottle	1.		6
The same, the quart .....	1.		3
Virginia Ale the quart			71/2
Virginia Small beer the quart		4	
Good Cyder, the gallon	1.		3
Good Hughes best apple Cyder the quart		8	
A dinner with good small beer	1.		3
A breakfast or supper with good small beer	1.		
A night's Lodging with clean sheets			6
Pasturage for a Horse for twenty-four hours			6
Stablage for a horse for twenty-four hours			6
Corn or Oats per Gallon			6



STAIRWAY "TUCKAHOE"





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## SOCIAL LIFE

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Taverns at the county seats were throughout the period centres of social and political life, especially upon court days, which beaming hosts turned into feast days for the guests that boisterously overflowed them. The most famous of them all was the Raleigh Tavern, at Williamsburg—a square wooden building with many dormer windows and a leaden bust of Sir Walter Raleigh over the door. Its chief pride was a wainscoted banquetting hall named after an apartment in a famous London tavern, the “Apollo Room,” which was the scene of many brilliant balls and assemblies and notable political gatherings, not only before the Revolution, but long afterward. In 1742 the Raleigh was kept by one Henry Wetherburn, whose fame as a mixer of punch has been preserved by the Goochland County records. William Randolph of “Tuckahoe” sold to his friend Peter Jefferson—the father of Thomas Jefferson—two hundred acres of land for mine host Wetherburn’s “biggest bowl of Arrack punch.” The deed was duly recorded in Goochland where it may be seen to-day.

Fisher makes special mention of the unusually handsome furniture in a tavern in the town of Leeds which he visited during his horseback journey in 1755. He says:

“The Chairs, Tables, &c. of the Room I was conducted into was all of mahogany and so stuff with fine, large glaized copperplate prints that I almost fancied myself in Jeffries’ or some other elegant print shop.”

Among the many other famous colonial taverns were the “Rose and Crown,” in Hampton, and the “Rising Sun,” in Fredericksburg.<sup>14</sup>

A form of gambling extremely popular and generally countenanced in Virginia was the lottery for disposing of property of various kinds and raising money for sundry

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<sup>14</sup> Now the property of The Association for the Preservation of Va. Antiquities.

purposes. In 1753 the *Gazette* advertised a lottery to raise money for preserving the country against the French. There were to be 25,000 tickets at a pistole each, and 2050 of them were to draw prizes. In 1768 Richard Graves announced a lottery to dispose of his estate in New Kent consisting of his plantation, furniture, livestock, slaves, and a double chair and harness for two horses.

In his advertisement he appealed to the public to take chances and "have the pleasure of affording some relief to a distressed but deserving family," declaring that his "misfortunes were not occasioned by any want of industry but by accidents and his too hospitable, friendly and generous temper, which all his acquaintance can testify."

Among other lotteries advertised in the *Gazette* of 1768 was one by William Byrd, third, for disposing of his property at Shockhoe and Rocky Ridge, as Richmond and Manchester were then called, and one "for raising the sum of £900 to make a road over the mountains to the Warm and Hot Springs in Augusta County."

The healing properties of the mineral springs with which the Virginia mountains abound brought going to the springs into fashion in the seventeen-forties, and thenceforward many of the low country planters journeyed by coach-and-six, over hill, over dale, to give their families the benefit of the change to bracing mountain air and let them drink of and bathe in the health-giving waters. In June, 1747, Henry Lee, of Westmoreland, was at Berkeley Springs. During the same summer the Reverend L. Schnell, a Moravian missionary of Pennsylvania, visited them, and in his "Diary of a Journey to Maryland and Virginia" says he saw "many sick people" there.

In 1750 Dr. Thomas Walker, who also kept a diary, "went to the Hot Springs and found six invalids there."

In 1769 Fielding Lewis wrote to Washington:

“I hope you have had an agreeable Journey to the Springs and that Miss Custis has been benefited by them.”

Of course the accommodations at these watering places were extremely primitive. Life at them was doubtless not unlike that enjoyed in the mountain camps of to-day. In addition to their taverns, doubtless some of the frequenters of all of them, as at Capon Springs on North Mountain, put up “cottages to shelter them.”

Going to the fair is another diversion which began in colonial days. It was, like the old English fair, a market—its special object being to bring buyers and sellers together—but, also like the English fair, it was accompanied by various amusements. As early as 1665 the Governor and Council ordered that a fair be held twice each year at Jamestown. In 1737 the *Virginia Gazette* announced that a fair was to be held in Williamsburg twice yearly and that prizes in money would be awarded for the best display of horses, cattle, sheep and hogs. The advertisement continues:

“The fair is to hold three days and there will be horse-racing and a variety of diversions every day, and the following prizes to be contended for. A good hat to be cudgelled for. A saddle to be run for—a handsome bridle for the horse that comes in second and a good whip for the third. A pair of silver buckles to be run for, by men, from the College to the Capitol—a pair of shoes to him that comes in second, a pair of gloves to the third. A pair of pumps to be danced for by men. A handsome firelock to be exercised for. A pig with his tail soaped to be run after and given to the person that catches him and lifts him off the ground by his tail.”

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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The next issue of the paper told of the success of the fair. The *Gazette* also contains a number of references to the Fredericksburg fair, which seems to have been a regular institution from the middle of the eighteenth century on. Fairs were held at several other places, and in 1762 Staunton in The Valley had one. During it Elizabeth Hog and Priscilla Christian went to Crow's store and got as "a fairing" a present of ribbon from the clerk.<sup>15</sup>

While the constant arrival of English ships which came into the principal rivers and delivered their consignments almost at the planters' doors, encouraged the direct importation of goods from London merchants, Virginia women were not altogether denied the delights of shopping, for in the towns and in the country there were surprisingly well-stocked stores. Many of the planters had on their estates general merchandise stores managed by salaried or indentured storekeepers, in which English and Virginia goods could be bought, and tobacco was currency. Says Michel:

"When the inhabitants need something they go to the nearest Merchant who gives them what they want. It is recorded according to agreement. When the tobacco is ripe the Merchant arrives to take what is coming to him."

Daniel Sturgis, a storekeeper who had been a servant, wrote about fifty years later:

"Stores here are much like shops in London, only with this difference, the shops sell but one kind or species of wares, and stores all kinds. These commodities we sell planters and receive in return tobacco, a weed of very little service to mankind as to its use, yet as it is the promoter of a great trade, is of infinite advantage to Great Britain."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Chalkley's Augusta Co. Records, i, 341.

<sup>16</sup> Guide to Material for Amer. Hist. in British Pub. Rec. Office, ii, 323.

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## SOCIAL LIFE

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One of the earliest of Virginia merchants was Thomas Warnett, of Jamestown, in whose will, made in 1629, the stock of his store and his personal belongings are so impartially mixed that the reader shall be permitted to exert his ingenuity in deciding which is which. He makes bequests of "butter, salt, candles, pepper, ginger, meal, ink, writing paper, silk stockings, white starch, blue starch, pins, knives, a green scarf edged with gold lace, his best sword with gilt belt, his second best sword, his felt hat, sheets, towels, napkins, tablecloths, a gilded looking-glass, a black beaver hat, a doublet of black camlet, a pair of black hose, vinegar, thread of several colors, silk and thread buttons, a pewter candlestick, oil, a black felt hat, a suit of grey kersie, a weeding hoe, a 'howing' hoe, Irish stockings, bars of lead, gunpowder, a Polish cap furred, a pair of red slippers."<sup>17</sup>

In the records of Henrico County is an inventory made in 1678, of the stock of a store in the little village of Bermuda Hundred—then almost on the frontier—which had been owned by Henry Isham of that place and two London merchants named Richards. Among the goods were women's and men's shoes, "French falls," children's shoes, axes, steel spades, a bramble saw, shovels and tongs, hammers, reaping hooks, "scarlet cloth," tapestry, men's woolen stockings, brown sheeting, lawn, "pintadales," fine calico, tufted hollands, blue linen, gloves, women's bodices, children's, women's, and boys' stockings, whalebone, candlewick, thread of various colors, girls' and women's hoods, pins, ribbon, ivory and horn combs, children's caps, buttons, silk galloon, silk floss, "tammy," "East India petticoats," canvas, wax, spoons, chains, brandy, guns,

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<sup>17</sup> Water's Gleanings, 39.

gunlocks, powder, nutmegs, pepper, trays, strainers, bellows, salt, trenchers, milk-pails, and steelyards. Another store which is believed to have been in Bermuda Hundred and belonged to Colonel Francis Eppes, who was killed by the Indians in 1679, had an even larger and more varied stock, including some books, among them "a Bible in quarto, with the Apocrypha," "two play books," "The English School-master," "The Orphan's Legacy," "The Academy of Compliments," and "The Clerks Tutor."

Later the finest stores in the colony were, naturally, at Williamsburg. The *Gazette* of 1751 contains some appealing advertisements of their wares. In that year George Gilmer, Apothecary, announced:

"Imported in the *Duchess of Queensbury* and just come to Hand, a large Assortment of Drugs with all manner of Chymical and Galenical Medicines, faithfully prepared, also a quantity of Almonds in the soft shell, fresh Currans, Turkey Coffee, Prunes, Tamerinds, Bateman's and Stouton's Drops, . . . Cinnamon, Cloves, Mace, Nutmeg, Black Pepper and all-spice, Annodyne Necklaces, White and Brown Sugar Candy, Sugar Plumbs, Carraway Comfits, Candied Eringo, Citron, Allum, Vermicelli, Sandiver, Borax, Ratsbane, Crucibles, Wine Stone Indigo, Chocolate, Bohea, Congo and Green Tea, Strong and good White Tartar Emetic, with ditto dark nice cut Sarfa, Black Soaps, China Root, Saltpetre, Oriental and Occidental Bezoar Sponge, Gold Leaf, Musk, Plenty of Vials and Pots, Coltsfoot, Birdlime, Spanish Juice, Juice of Buckthorn," *et cetera*. "To be sold at reasonable Rates by the Subscriber, at his Shop nigh the Court House, the Corner of Palace Street, Williamsburg."

In the same year John Mitchelson advertised, "Great variety of Household Furniture of the newest Fashions,





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JOHN TAYLOE (2D) OF "MT. AIRY"



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London make, viz.: Mahogany Chests of drawers, Ditto Dressing tables, Ditto Card ditto, Ditto Claw ditto, Ditto Chairs; Ditto Bedsteads, some with silk and some with Worked damask Furniture, Window Curtains, &c. &c. Ditto tea boards & tea chests and a dumb waiter, fine large gilt, carved and plain Sconce glasses, a Chimney glass and dressing glass, Turkey Carpets, a Spinet, Sundry pictures done by good hands, Likewise linens, Iron, Brass, and Pewter wares of Sundry sorts for Home use."

In the following year James Craig, jeweller, imported a new assortment of "silver work," diamonds, amethysts, and "diamond, mourning and other rings," to be sold "for ready money only."

In 1769 William Willess, "gunsmith from Birmingham," announced that he had "opened shop opposite the playhouse in Williamsburg."

Among novelties imported by capital city merchants for this year were "shapes, ornaments and mottoes for desserts."

The dress goods and millinery advertised show that town and visiting belles had close at hand ample provision for making themselves ready on short notice, and according to the latest demands of fashion, for one of Mistress Stagg's or la Baronne de Graffenreid's "Assemblies," or a "birth-night ball" at the Governor's Palace.

Among country stores which patronized the advertising columns of the *Gazette* was one "in Sussex County, near Peter's Bridge," which in 1766 had for sale "broad cloths with full trimmings for suits, stuffs for gowns and millinery ware."

Philip Fithian, before leaving "Nomini Hall," where he had been not only well cared for but happy, went shopping at a nearby store to buy parting gifts for the Carter girls, who had been his pupils. He selected "a neat gilt

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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paper snuff-box for Miss Priscilla, a neat best clear hair-comb apiece for Miss Nancy and Fanny, and a broad, elegant sash apiece for Miss Betsy and Harriet." For the whole collection he paid fifteen shillings.

The merchants in importing stock usually ordered "spring goods" in the fall and "winter goods" in spring.

In The Valley where no tobacco was grown the skins of animals became currency. Wolves were troublesome there as in other frontier districts of the colony, and the Government offered rewards for their destruction. In 1734 Samuel Woods bought eleven and a quarter yards of "Masquerade" and seven and a half yards of "Sagathee," a heavy woolen stuff, at Samuel Smith's store, in Augusta County, and in payment gave the merchant an order for the bounty on two wolves' heads. In 1738 Michael Woods bought a dozen Catechisms at the same store for six foxes, seven raccoons and one beaver.

The Augusta Records also show that in 1770 one "Captain Sawyers" had a "peddling store" in Bedford.

The peddler with his pack was a familiar figure in Colonial Virginia, throughout the period. Perhaps he was in the business for himself, perhaps was one of several like him sent out by a store to show his wares from house to house, and sell them if possible, but certainly to create a ripple of the kind of excitement looking at new goods and perchance securing a bargain brings to women in lonely neighborhoods. The peddler himself was doubtless a welcome visitor, for he could hardly make his round without picking up many a bit of gossip; a call from him was as good as a newspaper.

Among English fashions which the Virginians, very happily, did not bring with them was that of duelling, for

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though duels were frequent after the Revolution, they were so rare in the colony that only two of them are known to have been actually fought. The first of these was at "Dancing Point," in Charles City County, in 1619, when a sea-captain named Edward Stallinge was killed by Captain William Eppes. In the second, in 1624, George Harrison died from a cut between the knee and garter from the sword of Captain Richard Stephens.

In 1653 Richard Denham was the bearer of a challenge from his father-in-law, Captain Thomas Hacket, to Mr. David Fox, a magistrate sitting on the bench. For this disregard of the law and of propriety Denham was given six lashes on his bare back, and Hacket held without bail and his case sent on to the next General Court.

There were other challenges, one of which resulted disastrously. In 1765 John Scott, the eighteen-year-old son of the rector of Quantico Church, who had himself been set apart for the ministry, had a quarrel with John Baylis, an older man. Baylis spoke so insultingly of young Scott and his father that the youth sent him a challenge by his brother-in-law and chosen second, Cuthbert Bullitt. Mr. Bullitt tried to dissuade his "dear Johnny," but failing, delivered the challenge with the resolve to make another attempt to patch up the quarrel at the meeting, which was to be before sunrise, behind the church. This he did, and so angered Baylis that he opened fire, which Bullitt returned with "Johnny's" pistol and instead of the duel coming off as arranged, Bullitt gave Baylis a mortal wound. He was acquitted on a plea of self-defence, and he and his family sorrowed with the widow and children of Baylis. Young Johnny Scott fled over the sea, where he completed his education at King's College, old Aberdeen, and while doing so lived up to his reputation for impetu-

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ousness by marrying—secretly, it seems, though he was forgiven—a daughter of one of the professors. Later he was ordained and returned to America as chaplain to the Governor of Maryland and rector of the Parish of Ever-sham, in that province.

While the colonists were much given to litigation and the court records show innumerable and long continued suits, the lawyer had no distinctive place apart from the mass of the people. He was simply a planter who practised law. The justices of the county courts and judges of the general courts were not men trained to the legal profession, but some knowledge of law was part of the education of every gentleman.

With the doctors it was different. Their work, like that of the clergy, set them apart; it was not, like that of the lawyers, in court and legislature, but in the home where it placed them upon the most familiar and confidential footing and made them a part of the daily life of the people.

It seems strange when, according to modern views, the early colonial physicians were utterly ignorant of the true principles of medicine, and when sanitation and germs were alike undreamed of, that these doctors cured anybody. They undoubtedly did make cures, though their successors of to-day may be of the opinion that their patients recovered in spite of them.

In 1622 Doctor Edward Gibson treated successfully a number of patients at Falling Creek—among them Thomas Fawcett, who was “farre spent with the dropsy.” When Doctor Pott was convicted at Jamestown for branding other men’s cattle as his own, one reason given for his pardon was that the Virginians should not be deprived of his skill in treatment of the “epidemical diseases” of the

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country. He was a Master of Arts, as well as an M.D., and had been sent to Jamestown by the Virginia Company of London, on account of his ability.

There were from the beginning some physicians in the colony who had been regularly trained in their profession as it was known in that day, but it is likely that most of the colonial practitioners had studied as apprentices, and no doubt the colonies were good fields for quacks. It must be remembered that even in England many practising physicians had no degree. Late in the period—for twenty years or more before the Revolution—many young Virginians went to Edinburgh to study medicine, and the character of the profession was decidedly raised.

As was natural, Virginia physicians made many experiments with native plants. Early in the eighteenth century Doctor John Tennant, of Williamsburg, acquired local fame by his advocacy of rattlesnake root as a specific for many diseases, especially pleurisy, and Doctor John Mitchell, of Urbanna, Middlesex County, who died in London in 1768, was not only a distinguished physician but made a name for himself by his valuable researches and discoveries in botany. He was an author of scientific books, a Fellow of the Royal Society and gave information about American flora to Linnaeus, who named the *Mitchella repens* after him. In 1737 this advertisement appeared in the *Virginia Gazette*:

“Every Man his own Doctor Or the Poor Planter’s Physician. Prescribing plain and easy Means for Persons to cure themselves of all or most of the Distempers incident to this climate, and with very little charge, the medicines being chiefly the Growth and Production of this Country.”

Doctors were constantly employed to treat servants and slaves, and planters were not permitted to neglect bills

for such service. On the same day—March 30, 1640—the Lower Norfolk County Court ordered Robert Came to pay the bill of “Thomas Bullock, Chirurgeon,” and John Drayton that of Thomas Sawyer, for “physic” administered to slaves.

In 1764 Colonel Theodorick Bland placed an epileptic slave under the care of Doctor James Greenhill, of Stony Creek, who in giving up his patient after several months, made a quaint report of his treatment, in a letter to Colonel Bland.

“According to your request,” runs the letter, “I have sent the negro home but altho he is much amended yet I am apprehensive that the disease is not quite vanquished & therefore must desire that he be permitted to continue the course of medicines he is now under at least 6 weeks or two months longer. . . .

“When first he came to me I put him on a course of Cumabarine Medicines. I Bled him, in the fit, vomited him afterwards and . . . gave him aorthrementsics and mercurial purges. All this seemed to do no good. I therefore Resolved to give him a shock from two Glass Spheres fixed to an Electric Machine, but before I could get it completely fixed I drew a blister on the scalp behind—upon the Occiput, dressed it according to Art and made it perpetual, at the same time putting him under a different course of Medicines than had been tried before. The Blister ran Bountifully for a while; but drying, I laid another upon the nape with an Intent to Stimulate a Branch of a Considerable Nerve Called par Vagum which in that part Lays Something Superficial, continuing the Medicines with little Alteration. This succeeded and the next Change of the Moon expecting the fit, as usual, he missed them. The Medicines has been continued and he





HALL AT "MT. ZION," WARREN COUNTY



MANTEL IN A PANELED BEDROOM



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has missed the fits this last full moon again. The Blister is almost dry but I intend if the fellow stays with me to draw a fresh one. It is something remarkable that the fits has Usually returned when the Moon was in the Sign Capricorn Even When it was a week before or after the full or change."

There is little doubt that had the poor darkey been given his choice he would have preferred fits at the change of the moon to bleedings, vomitings, electric shocks, and "perpetual" blisters.

The customary doctor's charge in Virginia seems to have been as in England, a guinea a visit—the fee received by Doctor Pasteur, of Williamsburg, when he treated the mashed finger of Lady Tryon, the wife of the Governor of North Carolina, during her visit to the Governor and his lady in Virginia.

The tourist, Burnaby, summing up his impressions of the Virginia people in 1760, declares:

"The climate and external appearance of the country conspire to make them indolent, lazy and good-natured; extremely fond of Society and much given to convivial pleasures. In consequence of this, they seldom show any spirit of enterprise or expose themselves willingly to fatigue. Their authority over their slaves renders them vain and imperious and entire strangers to that elegance of sentiment which is so particularly characteristic of refined and polished nations. Their ignorance of manhood and of learning exposes them to many errors and prejudices. The public or polished character of the Virginians corresponds with their private one; they are haughty and jealous of their liberties, impatient of restraint and can scarcely bear the thought of being controlled by superior

power. Many of them consider the Colonies as independent states, not connected with Great Britain otherwise than by having the same common King." He adds a note:

"General Characters are always liable to exceptions. In Virginia I have had the pleasure to know several gentlemen endowed with many virtues and accomplishments."

"The women," he continues, "are upon the whole rather handsome, though not to be compared with our fair country women of England. They have but few advantages and consequently are seldom accomplished; this makes them reserved and unequal to any interesting or refined conversation . . . They seldom read or endeavor to improve their minds; however they are in general, good housewives and though they have not, I think, quite as much tenderness and sensibility as the English ladies, yet they make as good wives and as good mothers as any in the world."

Burnaby had a kindly feeling toward the Virginians, but his opinions show how far British prejudice could go. It must be remembered that he came from an England where the morals of Tom Jones and the manners of Tony Lumpkin were far from being confined to fiction. "Sensibility," in which he says Virginia women were lacking, was a fashionable affectation with which the mistress of a plantation was too busy to be afflicted. But let us hear from another witness from the same part of the world. Lord Adam Gordon, writing four years later, says:

"The first settlers were many of them younger Brothers of good Families in England, who for different motives chose to quit home in search of better fortune, their descendants who possess the greatest land properties in the Province, have intermarried and have always had a much greater connection with and dependence on the

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Mother Country than any other Province. . . . I have had an opportunity to see a good deal of the Country and many of the first people in the Province and I must say they far excel in good sense, affability and ease any set of men I have yet fallen in with, either in the West Indies or on the Continent, this, in some degree, may be owing to their being most of them educated at home (in England) but cannot be altogether the Cause, since there are amongst them many Gentlemen, and almost all the Ladies, who have never been out of their own Province, and yet are as sensible, Conversible and accomplished people as one would wish to meet with."

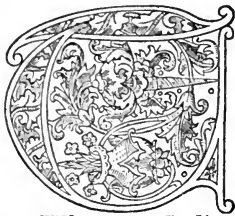
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COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

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HE first lover, in very truth "sighing like a furnace," of whom Virginia records give us a picture, is John Rolfe, gentleman, the earliest tobacco planter in the colony, a member of his Majesty's Council and soon to be Secretary of State.

When the Indian maiden Pocahontas, who had been sold to Captain Argall for a copper kettle by the perfidious uncle to whose care Powhatan had entrusted her, was brought to Jamestown and held there as a hostage, Master Rolfe astonished himself as much as any one else by losing his heart to her. No sonnet to his lady's eyebrow could give relief to the agitation and perplexity into which so unprecedented a situation threw him, and which he feared would bring upon him the wrath of Heaven, the censure of the government, and the criticism of his fellows, so he wrote instead a long letter to the Governor, Sir Thomas Dale, explaining his plight, and begging approval of his marriage with her whom, he declared, "My heart and best thoughts are and have byn a long tyme soe intangled and entralled in soe intricate a laborinth that I was even awearied to unwynde myselfe thereout."

He was not, he wrote, "so voyde of friends nor meane in Birth" that he could not make a match to his "greate content" in England, and he had looked "warily and with circumspection" for reasons to provoke him to fall in love with one whose "education hath byn rude, her manners barbarous, her generation cursed and soe discrepant in all nurriture" to himself, and "oftentimes with feare and tremblinge" had concluded that his sentiments toward her

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## COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

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were "wicked instigations hatched by him whoe seeketh and delighteth in man's destruction."

But for all his conscientious scruples against marriage with a heathen whose ancestors were in hell—for he was far too orthodox to believe in a happy hunting ground for unbelieving braves—Master Rolfe's love for the forest maid tortured him by day and disturbed his rest at night. Finally, he declared, thoughts of her had taken the form of a "more gracious temptacon . . . pullinge me by the eare and cryene why doest not thowe endeavour to make her a Christian." Since when he had persuaded himself and hoped to persuade Governor Dale, that it was his religious duty to wed the Indian king's daughter.

They were married about April 5, 1614, in Jamestown Church, and with the consent of the Governor and of the bride's father, who sent to witness the ceremony two of her brothers and an uncle who gave her away. Doubtless it was the charm which captivated Rolfe that won so many friends for this American princess when she visited England.

There was much wooing and wedding at Jamestown and thereabout, in 1619 and the two years following, during which the Virginia Company sent out a number of English maidens—about a hundred and fifty in all—to provide wives for the lonely bachelors of whom the colony was in great part comprised. These courageous girls were said to be "such as were specially recommended to the Company for their good bringing up," and were to be given in marriage to the "most honest and industrious planters," each of whom was to pay his bride's passage money—a hundred and twenty pounds of tobacco. The Governor and Council were urged to be "as fathers" to the maidens, who were not to be forced into distasteful marriages, but

were to be placed in homes of people of repute until they found husbands to their liking.

According to a letter from Virginia in 1622, all the maidens had then been mated.

In 1623 the colony had its first breach of promise case, which doubtless caused no end of hub-bub in high society. Only a few days after the death of Captain Samuel Jordan, of "Jordan's Point," on James River, the Reverend Greville Pooley, who had conducted the funeral services, went a-courting the young and wealthy widow, Cicely, taking with him Captain Isaac Madison as witness of the promise he hoped to receive. The fair Cicely accepted him, and he and she drank each other's health, after which he kissed her and said:

"I am thine and thou art mine till death us separate."

The lady desired the engagement might be kept quiet for a time as she did not wish it known she had bestowed her love so soon after her husband's death. Mr. Pooley promised to keep the secret, but was so elated by his success that he could not help letting it out. Whereupon Madam Cicely, saying that he "had fared better had he talked less," without giving him any notice engaged herself to Mr. William Farrar, an honored member of his Majesty's Council. The parson sued her for breach of promise, and in spite of the damaging testimony of Captain Madison not only lost his case but made and had duly recorded in court a formal release of the charmer, binding himself in the sum of five hundred pounds sterling "never to have any claim, right or title to her."

The Governor and Council were moved by this unique suit to issue a solemn proclamation prohibiting women from engaging themselves to more than one man at a time. The proclamation was disregarded at least once, for at a court held the following year it was ordered that:





POCAHONTAS

From a photograph of the original portrait



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“The next Sabbath day, in the time of divine Service, Eleanor Spragg shall publicly, before the congregation, acknowledge her offence in contracting herself to two several men at one time and penitently confessing her fault shall ask God’s and the Congregation’s forgiveness. To prevent the like offence in others it is ordered that every minister give notice in his church that what man or woman soever shall use words amounting to a contract (or engagement) of marriage to several persons, shall be whipped or fined according to the quality of the person offending.”<sup>1</sup>

In later years when Mr. William Roscow, who evidently recalled these famous cases but doubted the power of the law to keep a Virginia belle faithful to any one of her string of lovers, secured Sarah Harrison’s promise to marry him, he made her put it in writing and it was duly recorded, “Aprull ye 28, 1687,” as follows:

“These are to Certifye all persons in Ye World that I, Sarah Harrison, Daughter of Mr. Benja. Harrison, do & am fully resolved & by these presents do oblige myself (& cordially promise) to Wm. Roscow never to marry or contract Marriage with any man (during his life) only himself. To confirm these presents, I the abovesaid Sarah Harrison do call the Almighty God to witness & so help me God. Amen.

(Signed) SARAH HARRISON.”

Notwithstanding which the fascinating but fickle Sarah married only two months later the distinguished Doctor James Blair, the founder of William and Mary College. When in the course of the marriage ceremony the minister instructed her to promise to obey she replied, “No obey.” Upon which he refused to proceed and a second time told her to say obey. A second time she said, “No obey,” and a

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<sup>1</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., xix, 231, 234; xxi, 142-145.

second time the minister refused to proceed. Yet the third time she said, "*No obey*," whereupon the minister went on with the ceremony.<sup>2</sup>

The bridegroom seems to have passively acquiesced. Doubtless he dared not say a word lest he lose his lady, even at the altar. There is nothing in the records to suggest that he ever regretted that she jilted Mr. Roscow to marry him, and all witnesses agree that no matter how capricious Virginia belles of the day—who were often mere children—may have been with their lovers, they were generally above reproach as wives and mothers.

Among the interesting sights of old Jamestown to-day are the tombs, near the church, of Doctor Blair and his wife, the high-spirited Sarah. A sycamore tree has grown up between their graves carrying part of Mrs. Blair's tombstone—embedded in its trunk—some distance in the air, as if marble could not rest easy over the ashes of so independent a lady. Let any who may believe that there were no strong-minded women in the good old days remember Sarah Harrison Blair.

Perhaps the most desperate lover of the time was no less a person than Sir Francis Nicholson, Governor of the colony, who became so madly enamored of Martha Burwell, daughter of Lewis Burwell, the second, of "Carter's Creek," that he vowed to her that if she refused to marry him he would kill her father and her brothers. To Doctor Blair he swore that if she married anyone but himself he would cut the throats of three men—the bridegroom, the minister who performed the ceremony, and the justice who issued the license. The affair made a savory dish of gossip and rumors of it spread to England, and brought Governor Nicholson a letter of remonstrance from a friend there.

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<sup>2</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., vii, 278.

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The young lady braved all his threats and married Mr. Henry Armistead, of "Hesse," and there is no record of murder committed as a result.

Men and women married early and often in "Earth's only paradise, Virginia." Unhealthy conditions and ignorance of hygiene kept the dread reaper busy separating husbands and wives, but the lonely survivor—however devoted he or she may have been—was seldom slow to find another mate. Cicely Jordan only flirted with Parson Pooley, but on the very day—May 19, 1657—when the will of Thomas Brice, of Rappahannock, leaving his whole estate to his wife, was proved, a marriage contract between her and the Reverend William White, who officiated at the funeral, was recorded.

The *most* married woman of her day was Elizabeth ———, who had so many husbands that her maiden name has been lost. She was the wife successively of Thomas Stevens, Raleigh Travers, Robert Beckingham, Thomas Wilks, and George Spencer—prominent gentlemen, all of them—and is supposed to have been the Widow Spencer who married in 1697 William Man, and by taking this, her sixth, husband went Colonel John Carter, the husband of five wives, one better. Elizabeth Travers, the daughter of the aforesaid Madam Stevens-Travers-Beckingham-Wilks-Spencer-Man by her second marriage, was second wife of John Carter, Jr., and after his death became the third wife of Colonel Christopher Wormeley. Examples like this make it plain that the way of the genealogist who undertakes to untangle Virginia relationships is not a smooth one.

Colonel Byrd, writing to the Earl of Orrery in 1727, tells him that matrimony "thrives so excellently" in Virginia that "an Old Maid or an Old Bachelor are as scarce among us and reckoned as ominous as a Blazing Star."

He adds that one of the most "antique Virgins" he knows is his daughter Evelyn—who was then about twenty—and says, "Either our young Fellows are not smart eno' for her, or she seems too smart for them."

This is the earliest on record of the many attempts to explain why the lovely Evelyn Byrd died a spinster.

The proposal was a formal and elaborate matter in Colonial Virginia. The lover who had proper regard for the conventions and for a comfortable provision for himself and his heart's desire, confided his hopes to his father, who—if he approved—informed the father of the fair one that his son would ask permission to besiege her affections, and what estate he would settle upon him if he should be successful. If the match was acceptable to the lady's father, he replied stating what property he would settle upon his daughter. When the matter had been arranged to the satisfaction of both parents, the anxious lover was free to try his fortune with the maiden.

Courting a widow was a simpler matter for she disposed of her own heart, hand, and fortune as she pleased. as did the sister of William Fitzhugh, whose second husband, Mr. Luke, married her in 1692 without asking any by-your-leave of her family. The brother expressed himself as satisfied because where a widow of property was to be courted "consultations for marriage portions" were unusual.

When John Walker of "Belvoir" set his affections upon Mistress Elizabeth Moore, the following correspondence passed between his father and hers:

May 27th, 1764.

Dear Sir:

My son, Mr. John Walker, having informed me of his intention to pay his addresses to your daughter Elizabeth, if he should be agreeable to yourself, lady and daughter, it may not be amiss to

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## COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

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inform you what I feel myself able to afford for their support, in case of an union. My affairs are in an uncertain state, but I will promise one thousand pounds, to be paid in 1766, and the further sum of two thousand pounds I promise to give him; but the uncertainty of my present affairs prevents my fixing on a time of payment. The above sums are all to be in money or lands and other effects, at the option of my son, John Walker.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

THOMAS WALKER.

Col. Bernard Moore, Esq.,  
in King William.

May 28, 1764.

Dear Sir:

Your son, Mr. John Walker, applied to me for leave to make his addresses to my daughter, Elizabeth. I gave him leave, and told him at the same time that my affairs were in such a state that it was not in my power to pay him all the money this year that I intended to give my daughter, provided he succeeded; but would give him five hundred pounds more as soon after as I could raise or get the money, which sums you may depend I will most punctually pay to him.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

BERNARD MOORE.

To Thomas Walker,  
Castle Hill, Albemarle County, Va.<sup>3</sup>

In 1765 Colonel Warner Lewis, of "Warner Hall," gave young William Armistead, heir of "Hesse," who was in love with Molly Carter, of "Sabine Hall," a letter to Colonel Carter in which he said:

"This will be delivered to you by my nephew, Will Armistead, who informs me that you are acquainted with his errand, which I hope meets with your approbation. I heartily wish my God Daughter Molly may like him, if she does the sooner they are married the better." The writer says it will give him "great pleasure to see Miss

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<sup>3</sup> Page's "Page Family," 224.

Molly Mistress of Hesse," and adds, "You have been young yourself, for God's sake hurry on the Match."

Doubtless the happy pair thought Colonel Lewis the most delightful uncle in the world.

Another man and maid for whom the course of true love ran smooth were Nicholas Cabell and Hannah Carrington, from whom a legion of Cabells and their kin trace descent. In 1772 the young lover's father, Colonel William Cabell, received this letter from Hannah's father:

Dear Sir: I rec'd yours by your son Nicholas, whose intended marriage alliance to my family is agreeable to me. I have referred him to my daughter and he can inform you what progress he has made. He is a young man that I have a good opinion of, and if they get together I am in hopes you will find her a dutiful child and a satisfaction to you for the remaining part of your time here.

I am with respect

Y'r very hum'l servt.

GEORGE CARRINGTON.

Boys and girls, young men and maidens were then as they have been from the beginning, are now and ever shall be. The ever popular dance afforded abundant opportunity for soft eyes to look love to eyes that spoke again, long rides and drives, and walks in grove and garden for whispered vows; and who dare wager there was never a kiss stolen in curtained window-seat or rose-embowered summer-house? When the lover armed with parental consent, presented himself to his lady it is not likely that his declaration was always a surprise.

The Virginia belle was not too quick to bestow her hand, but kept her suitor on his knees long enough to make him appreciate her condescension in considering his petition. Anne Blair, daughter of President John Blair, in one of her gossipy letters to her sister, Mrs. Braxton, thus describes the manner in which such a Lady Disdain received





SARAH HARRISON  
Wife of Doctor James Blair



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a letter containing a proposal from a certain Mr. Tunstall:

“She was in a little Pett, but it was a very becoming one, let me tell you. A glowing blush suffused o’er her face attended with a trembling, insomuch that in extending her arm to reach me *the creature’s insolence* I thought ye Paper would have fallen from her Hand. The emotions I saw her in did not fail of exciting ye curiosity in me natural to all our Sex, so that a dog would not have caught more eagerly at a bone he was likely to lose than I did at the fulsome stuff (as she call’d it) tho’ must own on perusal was charmed with ye elegance of his stile; & I dare say he might with truth declare his Love for her to equal that of Mark Anthony’s for Cleopatra. She thought proper to turn his Letter back again with just a line or two signifying ye disagreeableness &c. &c. of ye subject. . . . There are several others Dancing and coopeeing about her, may they scrape all the skin off their shins stepping over the benches at Church in endeavoring who sho’d be first to hand her in the Chariot.”<sup>4</sup>

One more picture of the ways of men and maids from the letters of Anne Blair. In 1768 she and her sister Betsy were visiting another sister, Mrs. Cary, in Hampton, and the officers of several English men-of-war which happened to be in Hampton Roads were giving them the time of their lives. The sprightly Anne wrote Mrs. Braxton:

“Hampton is now more gay than the Metropolis. The Rippon, the Lancaster & the Magdalene are all in Harbour here; balls both by land and by Water in abundance, the gentlemen of the Rippon are I think the most agreeably affable set I have ever met with, & really it is charming to go on Board; the Drum and Fife, pleasing countenances,

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<sup>4</sup> “Blair, Banister, & Braxton Families,” 51.

such polite yet easy Behaviour all bespeak a hearty Welcome. This family receives a great many civilities from all the gentlemen, presents on presents; if there happens a day without seeing them there is so many comp'ts to enquire after our Healths that indeed to be people of consequence is vastly clever.

“ ‘How stand yr hearts Girls,’ I hear you ask? Why, I will tell you, mine seems to be roving amidst dear variety; & notwithstanding there is such Variety do you think Betsy Blair & Sally Sweeny does not contend for *one*? Betsy gave her Toast at Supper Mr. Sharp (a Lieutenant on Board ye Rippon) Miss Sally for awhile disputed with her, at length it was agreed to decide it with pistols when they should go to bed. No sooner had they got upstairs than they advanced up close to each other, then turning short round, Back to Back, marched three steps forward & fired; so great was the explosion & so suffocating the smell of Powder, that I quitted the Room, till by Betsy’s repeated shouts I soon learned she had got the better of her antagonist. Both survive.”

Notwithstanding the lively Betsy’s mock duel over the fascinating Lieutenant Sharp she finally looked over his head and married Captain Samuel Thompson, Commander of the *Rippon*.

Idle scribblings in old books have preserved glimpses of very real young folk. On the fly-leaf of a record book for the years 1671–1676, in the York County Clerk’s office, is written, “Hannah Armistead is One of ye handsomest Girls in Virgin’a, by Thomas Frayser.” And under it,

“Hannah For Ever, David Chamberlayne.”

On the fly-leaf of an old book in Gloucester County appears,

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“Jane Nelson is a neat girl; Betsy Page is a sweet girl; Lucy Burwell is the devil, if not the devil, she is one of his imps.”

Many adoring swains declared themselves in acrostics and complimentary verses in which the name of the beloved was sometimes concealed, which were published in the *Virginia Gazette*.

This tribute to Lucy Cocke is a fair sample of the acrostic:

L oveley dear Maid, my gen'rous tale approve—  
U ntaught in verse to sing the fair I love;  
C ould you but know the dictates of my heart,  
Y our gentle soul wou'd healing balm impart.  
C onquer'd by you, what raptures seize my breast,  
O say dear Charmer, will you make me blest?  
C onstant I'll prove as light to early day  
K ind as bright Phoebus to his darling May,  
E ach hour each moment shall my love display.

Other acrostics appearing during the same year—1768—were to Catherine Swann and Nancy Murray, while Alice Corbin's name was concealed in a rhymed puzzle.

Here is the first stanza of a poetical effusion, “On Miss Anne Geddy singing and playing on the Spinnet,” contributed by an anonymous admirer:

When Nancy on the spinnet plays  
I fondly on the virgin gaze  
And wish that she was mine:  
Her air, her voice, her lovely face  
Unite with such excessive grace,  
The Nymph appears divine.

Still another bit of complimentary verse—also anonymous—was entitled,

“A nosegay addressed to Miss Polly B.—in King William.”

Letters and wills show us both Washington and Jeffer-

son as ardent lovers. Washington, at the age of fifteen, wrote an acrostic on the name of Frances Alexander in which he declared that

Xerxes wasn't free from Cupid's Dart,  
And all the greatest Heroes felt the smart.

He himself felt the smart often, for young Frances was the first of a succession of damsels by whose "sparkling eyes" he was "undone." At sixteen he was in love with a "Low Land Beauty" who may have been the "Sally" to whom he wrote in 1748 from "Belvoir," when he was surveyor for Lord Fairfax, begging for a letter from her and saying:

"I am almost discouraged from writing to you, as this is my fourth since I received any from yourself," But cheerfully adding, "I pass the time much more agreeably than I imagined I should, as there is a very agreeable young lady lives in the same house where I reside (Colonel George Fairfax's wife's sister) that in a great measure cheats my sorrow and dejectedness, though not so as to draw my thoughts altogether from your parts."

About the same time he wrote to a friend whom he addressed as "Dear Robin":

"My place of residence at present is at his Lordship's where I might, were my heart disengaged, pass my time very pleasantly as there is a very agreeable young lady in the same house, Col. Geo. Fairfax's wife's sister, but that only adds fuel to the fire, as being often and unavoidably in company with her revives my former passion for your Low Land Beauty. Whereas were I to live more retired from young women I might in some measure alleviate my sorrow by burying that chaste and troublesome passion in oblivion, and I am very well assured that this will be the only antidote or remedy."

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The "agreeable young lady" was Mary Cary, with whom tradition says he was soon enough deeply in love, but like his Lowland Beauty, she failed to see the future hero in the susceptible youth, and gave her hand to Edward Ambler. According to one tradition the "Low Land Beauty" was Lucy Grymes, of Richmond County, who became the wife of Colonel Henry Lee; another says she was Betsy Fauntleroy, by whom also he was certainly rejected, for in 1751 he wrote to her father, William Fauntleroy:

"I purpose to wait on Miss Betsy, in hopes of a revocation of the former cruel sentence, and see if I can meet with any alteration in my favor."

In 1756 Robert Carter Nicholas wrote to him from Williamsburg:

"The snuff-box was properly returned & I took the Liberty of Communicating the Extatick Paragraph of your letter; what Blushes & confusion it occasioned I shall leave you to guess."

How "the snuff-box" came to be in Washington's possession, and the name of its fair owner, are not revealed.

In 1757 he was courting Mary Philipse of New York, whom he met during a visit there. In July of that year his friend, Joseph Chew, who had lately been in New York, wrote him:

"As to the Latter part of your Letter what shall I say? I often had the pleasure of Breakfasting with the Charming Polly. Roger Morris was there (don't be startled) but not always, you know him, he is a Lady's man, always something to say, the Town talks of it as a sure & settled affair. I can't say I think so . . . but how can you be Excused to continue so long at Phil'a? I think I would have made a kind of Flying March of it if it had only been

to see whether the Works were sufficient to withstand a Vigorous Attack, you a Soldier and a Lover."

Again Washington was disappointed, for the "charming Polly" chose his rival.

In March, 1758, he made a visit to Williamsburg, where he met and fell in love with the young, wealthy, and recently widowed Martha Custis. He was engaged to her before the first of April and ordered a ring for her, from Philadelphia, in May. Military duty called him from her side, but he wrote her from the frontier, on the march for the Ohio:

"A courier is starting for Williamsburg and I embrace the opportunity to send a few words to one whose life is now inseparable from mine. Since that happy hour when we made our pledges to each other, my thoughts have been continually going to you as another self. That an all-powerful Providence may keep us both in safety is the prayer of your ever faithful and affectionate friend."

They were married in the following January.

Jefferson, too, was unlucky in love, and finally consoled himself with a widow. He was, however, in youth, long constant to his earliest flame, Rebecca Burwell of "Carter's Creek," whom he fancifully called "Belinda." In 1762, when a law-student at William and Mary, he carried her picture in his watch like any college boy of to-day, and when it was injured by a wetting wrote of it to his chum and confidant, John Page:

"Although the picture be defaced there is so lively an image of her imprinted on my mind that I shall think of her too often I fear for my peace of mind; and too often I am sure to get through old Coke this winter." He adds, "Write me very circumstantially everything that happened at the wedding. Was *she* there? Because if she was I



THE PARLOR AT "SHIRLEY"





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ought to have been at the Devil for not being there too." Further on in the letter he says:

"I would fain ask Miss Becca Burwell to give me another watch paper of her own cutting which I should esteem much more were it a plain round one than the nicest in the world cut by other hands."

Jefferson was at this time in his life very much of a ladies' man, fond of dancing and society and a favorite with the girls, though he was devoted to but one. In the letter quoted he charges Page:

"Remember me affectionately to all the young ladies of my acquaintance, particularly the Miss Burwells and Miss Potters and tell them that though the heavy earthly part of me, my body, be absent, the better half of me, my soul, is ever with them. . . . Tell—tell—in short tell them all 10,000 things more than either you or I can now or ever shall think of as long as we live." He sends a special message to Alice Corbin, whom he has bet a pair of garters—for himself—that a certain "pretty gentleman" is soon to make his addresses to her.

John Page was at this time one of the numerous train of the fascinating Anne Randolph, of "Wilton" on the James, known to her circle as "Nancy Wilton." In January, 1763, the future author of the "Declaration of Independence" wrote to the future Governor of Virginia:

"How did Nancy look at you when you danced with her at Southall's? Have you any glimmering of hope? How does R. B. do? Had I better stay here and do nothing or go down and do less? . . . I have some thoughts of going to Petersburg if the Actors go there in May. If I do, I do not know but I may keep on to Williamsburg as the birthnight will be near. I hear that Ben Harrison has been at Wilton, let me know his success."

In the following July the lovesick youth wrote Page:

“If Belinda will not accept my service it shall never be offered to another. That she may I pray most sincerely, but that she will she never gave me reason to hope.”

On October 6 he and his “Belinda” were together at a ball in the “Apollo room” at Raleigh tavern and he decided to make a final trial of his fortune. On the day following he gave vent to his disappointment in a letter to John Page, in which he says:

“In the most melancholy fit that ever any poor soul was, I sit down to write to you. Last night, as merry as agreeable company and dancing with Belinda in the Apollo could make me, I never could have thought the succeeding sun would have seen me so wretched as I now am! I was prepared to say a great deal. I had dressed up in my own mind, such thoughts as occurred to me in as moving language as I knew how, and expected to have performed in a tolerably creditable manner. But, good God! When I had an opportunity of venting them, a few broken sentences, uttered in great disorder, and interrupted with pauses of uncommon length, were the too visible marks of my strange confusion!”

His discouragement was so complete that he seems to have made no further effort to win her, though a letter to another chum, William Fleming, early in the following year, shows that he was still hoping.

“Dear Will,” he writes, “I have thought of the cleverest plan of life that can be imagined. You exchange your land for Edgehill, or I mine for Fairfields, you marry S—y P—r, I marry R—a B—l, join and get a pole chair and a pair of keen horses, practice the law in the same courts, and drive about to all the dances in the country together.”

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This was followed speedily by another letter written "March 20, 1764, 11 o'clock at night," when he was suffering with a violent headache and his candle was nearly burned out, in which he says:

"With regard to the scheme which I proposed to you some time since, I am sorry to tell you it is totally frustrated by Miss R. B.'s marriage with Jacquelin Ambler which the people here tell me they daily expect. I say, the people here tell me so, for (can you believe it?) I have been so abominably indolent as not to have seen her since last October, wherefore I cannot affirm that I know it from herself. . . . Well, the Lord bless her I say!"

The fortune hunter was not unknown in Virginia. In 1773 Gustavus Brown Wallace of "Elderslie," King George County, who was afterward a lieutenant-colonel in the Revolution, wrote to his brother:

"Am just going to look up a wife among the Highlands of Fauquier, but say thou not a word, she has a deal of gowd and gear and is a bonnie muckle piece worth about £3000, which would make Elderslie smile, but her faither and mither are twa crooked people to deal with."

It is a pleasure to relate that Mr. Wallace failed to secure his Fauquier County heiress.

The banns of matrimony were published three times in Virginia as in England, though it was the custom for couples of means and station to obtain a special license, when the banns were omitted. The minister's fee was fixed by law—two hundred pounds of tobacco or twenty shillings in money being allowed for marriage by license, but only fifty pounds of tobacco or five shillings where the banns were proclaimed.

The wedding was attended by uproarious rejoicing and merrymaking. Not only did all Virginia love a lover but

the planting of a new roof-tree, the establishment of a new fireside, spelled happiness and growth to the thinly settled colony. In the earliest days salutes were fired as part of wedding celebrations, but though it was soon made unlawful to spend powder unnecessarily on account of the constant fear of Indian warfare, there was never any embargo on feasting, dancing, and the drinking of healths, and these were often kept up for days, with the happy pair as central figures in the festive scene.

Colonel James Gordon, of "Merry Point," tells in his journal of the marriage of his daughter Nancy to Mr. Richard Chichester, in 1758. The wedding was according to the usual custom with the well-to-do, at home, at eleven o'clock in the morning. All of the guests, except the parson—seventeen grown people and some children—spent the day and night. The next day was Sunday, and the whole company, including the bride and groom, went to church—Colonel Gordon himself and some of the gentlemen in his boat, Mrs. Gordon, the bridal pair, and the rest "in chairs." "All except Mr. Tayloe" returned to "Merry Point" for dinner.

The Augusta records mention a wedding reception given to George Hylton, a Fluvanna County carpenter, and his fifteen-year-old bride, Bethenia, in 1764.

In The Valley, where the ceremony was often performed at the minister's house, the quaint Irish custom of running for the bottle was in vogue. On the return of the bridal party the young men, when a few miles from the house, would spur their horses to a full gallop and race the rest of the way. The winner received a bottle of liquor decorated with white ribbon, and galloped back with it to meet the rest of the party. Opening the bottle, he presented it first to the bride and then to the groom, and when they

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had each tasted its contents it was passed around to all the company.<sup>5</sup>

Neither parsons nor newspapers spared the blushes of the newly married. Marriage sermons were fashionable, though they must have been embarrassing to those in whose honor they were preached, and local news items were even more personal than they are now. The *Virginia Gazette* of January 7, 1769, announced:

“On Sunday last Mr. William Nelson, Jr., and his newly married lady made their appearance in Church for the first time when the Rev. Mr. Dunlap delivered an excellent sermon on the marriage state.”

Here are other news items from the *Gazette* of the same year:

“We are informed that Mr. George Savage, lately of the Secretary’s office, is married to Miss Kendall, a young lady possessed of an independent fortune of at least 6000 pounds.”

“Yesterday was married in Henrico Mr. Wm. Carter, third son of Mr. John Carter, aged 23, to Mrs. Sarah Ellyson . . . aged 85. A Sprightly old girl with three thousand pounds fortune.”

And here is one from the issue of November 19, 1736:

“Yesterday was Fortnight Ralph Wormeley, of Middlesex County, Esq., a young Gentleman of a fine Estate, was married to the celebrated Miss Sally Berkeley, a young Lady of Great Beauty and Fortune.”

In the following year the *Gazette* announced the marriages of “Miss Betty Tayloe, a young lady of great beauty and fortune,” and “Miss Fanny Grymes, a young lady of great merit and fortune.”

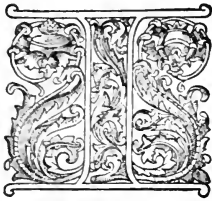
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<sup>5</sup> Kercheval’s “History of the Valley of Va.,” 58.

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## VI DRESS

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IN the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the apparel made the man, and social distinctions were marked by the quality and cut of clothing. A passion for dress was the natural result.

The American habit of keeping up with European fashions began at Jamestown. In England each new reign brought changes in costume which were conveyed by the first ships to Virginia where they were looked for as eagerly as "at home" and followed as faithfully as opportunity would allow. Merchants on both sides of the ocean took pains to advertise to their colonial patrons that their goods were "fashionable in London." The reign of James I was marked by unusually few changes, and as the dress of Elizabeth still prevailed when the colony named for her was settled, there is no doubt that the first comers stepped ashore in the huge ruffs associated with her name, or the broad turn-over collars known as "falling bands" which were contemporary with and had begun to supersede them, the slouch hats with brim turned rakishly up or down—cow-boy fashion—at the fancy of the wearer, the doublets and hose and low, rosette-trimmed shoes of her time. In an illustration in Smith's "Historie of Virginia" representing the doughty Captain taking the King of Pamunkey prisoner, his hat is sharply turned up in front and adorned with a feather hat-band. Over his doublet is the sleeveless jacket of leather for protection against sword cuts, known as a buff jerkin. Baggy hose meet smooth fitting stockings below the knee, where they are fastened at the side with rosette-trimmed garters. He wears the short hair





WILLIAM MOSELEY  
About 1640



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and beard of the day; and a linen falling band, a pair of the fashionable hanging sleeves dangling from his shoulders, leather gloves, rosetted shoes, and a sword complete his costume.

Smith's "Historie" also gives us the equipment the Virginia Company deemed necessary for the comfort of the colonist. The list includes a Monmouth cap, three falling bands, three shirts, one waistcoat, one suit of canvas, one of frieze, one of broadcloth, three pairs of stockings, four pairs of shoes, and a dozen "points." A Monmouth cap was a head covering made to resist the weather and worn from an early date by seafaring men, and a point was a lace of ribbon, leather, or worsted, with a tag at one end, used for fastening clothing together and for ornament. Doubtless our colonist wore his suits of frieze—a coarse woollen stuff—and of canvas for every-day work, and donned his broadcloth with gilt or silver buttons on Sundays.

A suit of light armor, a sword, and a gun were recommended for protection against Indian weapons, and the Census of 1624-5 shows that there were then in use in the colony three hundred and forty-two complete suits of armor, two hundred and sixty coats of mail and headpieces, and twenty quilted coats and buff-coats. As late as 1654 the inventory of Cornelius Lloyd, of Lower Norfolk County, names "one suite of Armor and one case of pistols, and fragments of rusty armor have been dug up at Jamestown within recent years.

After the disappearance of armor the sword continued to be part of the regular dress of the colonial gentleman and it appears in a great number of Virginia wills and inventories. Among many planters who bequeathed silver-hilted swords—generally with belts—between the latter

part of the seventeenth century and the middle of the eighteenth were Walter Whitaker, John Scott, Corbin Griffin, Henry Applewhite, Thomas Cocke, James Vaux, Andrew Monroe, George Glascock and William Young. In 1733 Colonel Francis Eppes bequeathed a "silver-hilted sword washed with gold," and the inventory of Governor Spotswood, 1740, names "one silver-hilted sword, gilt." Robert Beverley, who died in 1734, and John Spotswood, in 1758, each left two silver-hilted swords.

During Lord Delaware's time the crimson cloaks of his bodyguard made a striking variation from the habitual close-fitting doublet. In his lordship's portrait he wears a plain linen falling band above his velvet, while that of Captain George Percy, of his Majesty's Council, and that of Pocahontas painted during her visit to England, show collars of the same shape, but fashioned of rich lace. The Indian princess has deep cuffs to match her lace band, and carries an elegant fan of ostrich feathers, like any noble English lady of the day. She wears the small velvet cap or turban, which was an Elizabethan fashion, with a stylish jewelled hatband around it. Steeple hats of beaver with either a wide or narrow brim were more used by both women and men, and were sometimes adorned with a feather in addition to the jewelled, pearl, or silver hatband.

Variations of the doublet and hose made of the richest materials that could be bought or of coarser stuff, according to the estate of the wearer, were worn by Englishmen at home and across the sea until the coat, waistcoat, and knee breeches, the first of which appeared toward the close of the reign of Charles II, succeeded them. The doublet was often splendid with embroidery, slashings, gold or silver laces or buttons, and the upper part, or trunk, of the hose, of voluminous proportions and lined with a kind of crinoline

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called bombast, or stuffed with everything the wearer could lay his hands on, until it became as great a monstrosity as the farthingale worn by the ladies. In 1629 Thomas Warnett, the Jamestown merchant, bequeathed a doublet of black camlet—a handsome material of camel's-hair mixed with silk—a pair of black hose, silk stockings, and a black beaver hat. He also left a green scarf edged with gold lace, a sword with a gilt belt, and a pair of red slippers, and he had been the fortunate possessor of a gilded looking-glass in which to have the pleasure of beholding himself thus gloriously arrayed.

The inventory of Major Peter Walker, of Northampton County, 1655, mentions a broadcloth doublet and hose with silver lace. Major Walker also had a broadcloth short coat with silver lace, and a broadcloth coat for a horseman.

A passing fashion of the latter part of the reign of Charles I was the wearing of petticoat breeches in which a short skirt suggestive of a Highlander's kilt covered the upper part of the hose in place of the padded trunk. As late as 1768 the *Virginia Gazette* advertised a runaway servant who wore when last seen "petticoat trousers." They must have been an old pair rummaged out of some attic to which change of fashion had long before relegated them.

Another passing fashion of this reign—a revival from an earlier day—was the love-lock, a tress permitted to grow long and hang down on one side of the head. It was curled and tied with a ribbon which was generally a keepsake from some fair charmer, and was considered the vanity of vanities. In England tracts were written and sermons preached against it, and it was worn to some extent by gentlemen of fashion in Virginia for, in 1639,

during a quarrel between the Reverend Anthony Panton and Mr. Richard Kempe, Secretary of State of the Colony, who had been much at Court in England, the parson declared that the Secretary's love-lock was tied with a ribbon "as old as Paul's"—meaning the venerable St. Paul's Cathedral, London—which may only have proved that the gentleman cherished a proper sentiment for the gift of his lady by wearing it even after it had long lost its pristine freshness.

The dress of the Cavalier was dashing and picturesque. His doublet was of silk, satin, or velvet, slashed up the front, and had large loose sleeves. With it he wore a falling band of Vandyke lace. His hair was long, and, parted in the middle, fell in loose curls on his shoulders, his beard peaked, with small upward turned moustaches, and on the side of his head was a broad-brimmed hat with rich hatband and plume. A rapier hung from his sword-belt or sash, a short cloak was thrown over one shoulder, and sometimes an earring hung from one ear. Major John Brodnax, of York County, Virginia, who, according to tradition was a royalist who had seen service in the Civil Wars in England, bequeathed in 1657 his "Eare-Ring with a diamond in itt."

In striking contrast was the Puritan with his close-cropped head, plain cloth doublet and hose, narrow linen falling band, and steeple hat minus gold lace, glittering hatband, or waving plume.

Near the end of the reign of Charles II arose the vogue to frizz, curl, and powder the hair, or dispense with it altogether and wear in its place the new French head-dress variously known as the wig, periwig, or peruke. The rage for this freak of Dame Fashion's lasted in England over a hundred years, and many Virginian portraits

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bear witness to his popularity in the colony. In 1657 Major Brodnax bequeathed a periwig along with his diamond earring.

In 1752 William Gamble, wig-maker, of Williamsburg, was arrested for debt and advertised in the *Gazette* that he had taken into partnership Edward Charlton, "late of London," who would carry on his business in his shop "next door to the Raleigh Tavern," while he was in the debtor's prison. In 1766 William Godfrey, peruke-maker, opened shop in Williamsburg, and in 1768 a Yorktown merchant advertised that he had imported a "quantity of brown human hair and black horse hair" and was prepared to supply peruke-makers.

The craze for the wig began to decline about 1750, and give way to the braided pigtail and queue worn in a bag, with both of which powder was used and the hair around the face frizzed or curled—especially for dress occasions. Philip Fithian, writing at "Nomini Hall," 1774, says:

"I was waked by Sam, the barber, thumping at my door. I was dressed, in powder too; for I propose to see and dine with Miss Jenny Washington to-day."

With the wig and powdered hair appeared the cocked hat which took as firm a hold on the affections of the devotees of fashion—for it was worn until the Revolution. In *The Rambler* for 1751 is printed a letter from a young gentleman of London who says that his mother "would rather follow him to the grave than see him sneak about with dirty shoes and blotted fingers, hair unpowdered and a hat uncocked."

With the coats and waistcoats, the wigs and cocked hats of the "Merry Monarch's" time came cravats of lace with square ends hanging from a knot under the chin, and shoe buckles began to replace the long popular rosettes.

During the reigns of James II, William and Mary, and Anne, the periwig flourished like the proverbial green bay tree, and the square-cut coat with huge cuffs from which hung lace ruffles became general and, with slight variations, was the gentleman's dress throughout the remainder of the colonial period. With the decline of the wig the elaborate lace cravat gave way to the severe stock.

Woman's dress underwent fewer decided changes. The starched ruff or more becoming falling band of linen or lace, the wide or narrow brimmed sugar-loaf hat, the close fitting and more or less ornate stomacher, the billowing crinoline held sway for generations.

With the reign of Charles II these gave way to less stiff, formidable attire—the low-necked bodice, the petticoat, to display which the voluminous gown parted in the middle and often flowed out in a train behind; uncovered curls. Up to this time my lady's hair had generally been partly or altogether concealed by a "coif," "hood," or "cap"; and caps of some description were fashionable for women, young and old, throughout the colonial period. Virginia portraits show them in great variety.

In 1629 Thomas Warnett bequeathed a "coif" and a "cross-cloth of wrought gold," which had doubtless been imported for sale. A coif was a close cap covering the top, sides and back of the head, and a cross-cloth was worn with it for ornament. In 1643 Robert Morton, of Lower Norfolk, bought two "Holland Quoifes."

With the reign of William and Mary came more formal costume for women—including the towering head-dress constructed by combing the hair upward over a cushion and decorating it with quantities of ribbon and lace. In Queen Anne's time there was a return to the simpler and more natural arrangement of tresses. Gowns were now





JOHN PAGE  
About 1660



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## DRESS

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flounced and furbelowed, and the hooped petticoat—successor to the farthingale—appeared. With some variations, the fashions of this gracious lady's reign remained through the period, but near its close the hair rose again in mountains of puffs, curls, and powder, ornamented with tufts of feathers, flowers, or ribbon known as egrets.

A majority of the colonial portraits of Virginia women show costumes and head-dress of elegant and charming simplicity; a favorite arrangement of the hair shows it parted and pushed softly back from the face, with a loose curl drawn over one shoulder somewhat after the fashion of the love-lock, and sometimes called a "heart-breaker."

Fithian describes the dress of some of the girls he saw at Christian's dancing class at "Nomini," in 1774, when the ornate top-knot was in vogue. Of Jenny Washington, aged seventeen, he says:

"Her dress is rich and well chosen, but not tawdry, nor yet too plain. She appears to-day in a chintz cotton gown with an elegant blue stamp, a sky blue silk quilt, spotted apron, and her light brown hair craped up with two rolls at each side, and on top a small cap of beautiful gauze and rich lace, with an artificial flower interwoven."

Aprons were frequently used for ornamental as well as practical purposes in England and Virginia. According to the inventory of Mrs. Sarah Taylor, of Lower Norfolk, she left, in 1640, a "sea green apron," valued at one pound four shillings—equal to at least twenty-five dollars to-day. In 1769 a Williamsburg milliner advertised flowered gauze aprons. A "quilt" was a quilted petticoat. Fithian continues:

"Miss Hale"—aged about fourteen—"wears a white holland gown, cotton diaper quilt very fine, a lawn apron and has her hair craped up and on it a small tuft of ribbon for a cap."

Betsy Lee, a child of thirteen, has on "a neat shell calico gown," and her light hair is "done up with a feather."

At a ball this observant young Presbyterian divinity student attended as an interested looker-on, "Miss Ritchie" was appparelied in a "blue silk gown and her black hair done up neat without powder."

Extravagance in dress was frowned upon by the law-makers in the early days of the colony. The Assembly of 1619 passed a law that every bachelor should be assessed according to the value of his own apparel, and every married man according to that worn to church by himself and his family. Notwithstanding which John Pory, who presided over that famous gathering, said in a letter to England:

"Our cowe-keeper here of James Citty, on Sundays, goes accoutred all in fresh fflaming silke, and a wife of one that had in England professed the blacke arte not of a scholler but of a Collier, weares her rough bever hatt with a faire perle hatband and silken sute there to correspondent."

In 1621 the authorities in England directed the Governor, Sir Francis Wyatt, "not to permit any but the Council and the heads of hundreds to wear gold in their cloaths or to wear silk till they make it themselves." This was both to discourage display and to create interest in the silk industry which the Virginia mulberry tree made an early and long cherished dream of the colony and the Company. On account of the low price of tobacco a law was passed in 1661 forbidding, under penalty of confiscation, the importation of silk either made up into garments or by the piece, save for hoods and scarfs, of "bone lace of silk or thread," or of ribbons "wrought with gold or

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silver”; but as this act is erased in the original record of laws, it was probably vetoed by the Governor. It is sometimes difficult to determine just what is meant by “lace,” as the word is used for both the tapes and cords extensively employed in fastening clothing together and lace with an open-work pattern purely for decoration. Laces made with thread wound on bone bobbins were called “bone lace” in England and in the colonies.

In 1639 Henry Sewell, of Lower Norfolk County, imported one-half piece of silk Mechlin and ten yards of silver lace.

Here is a bill for lace brought in 1677 by William Sherwood who, though he was Attorney General of the Colony, was not one of the wealthiest planters.

	£	s.	d.
To 1 Cravat Lace cost .....	5	0	0
To 4 Yards Lace Cost 25 sh <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub> yard .....	5	0	0
To 1 Yard of fine Lace for a pinner .....	1	10	0
To 3 Yards of Lace for Frills and falls Cost 16 sh. 18d. 2	2	8	0
To 6 Yards of fine plain ground Lace at 8s. 6d. ....	2	11	0
To 3 Yards of Point Lace for a Handkerchief at 6s. 6d. 0	0	19	0
To 1 Yard of narrow Lace at .....	0	2	0
To 2 Tiffany Whisks .....	1	0	0
	£18 10 0		

It should be remembered that money at this period was worth three or four times as much as it is to-day. “Frills and falls” were sleeve ruffles and collars, and a “pinner” was a head-dress with lace streamers to hang down on each side of the face, while a “tiffany whisk” was a neckerchief of a gauzy silk fabric known as tiffany.

In 1724 Colonel Thomas Jones ordered from London “a girls blew hatt” lined with silk and trimmed with a ribbon band and “a rich open silver lace,” and in 1728

when Mrs. Jones was in England Mrs. Mary Stith wrote her from Virginia:

"When you come to London pray favour me in your choice of a suit of pinners suitably dressed with a cross-knot roll or whatever the fashion requires, with suitable ruffles and handkerchief. I like a lace of some breadth, and of a beautiful pattern, that may be plainly seen, fine enough to look well, but not a superfine costly lace. And likewise beg your choice of a very genteel fan."

The handkerchief "suitable" to wear with the fashionable pinners was evidently a neck handkerchief.

Ladies going abroad were often asked to shop for their friends, just as they are to-day. In 1752 Lady Gooch, the wife of Governor Sir William Gooch, went to England, and at the request of the Reverend Thomas Dawson, rector of Bruton Church, Williamsburg, bought for his wife, Madam Priscilla Bassett Dawson, a fashionable laced cap, handkerchief, ruffles, and tuckers, a fashionable brocade suit, a pair of stays, a blue satin petticoat, a scarlet cloth under-petticoat, a pair of blue satin shoes, full trimmed, a hoop, a pair of blue silk stockings, a fashionable silver girdle, a fan.<sup>2</sup>

Washington was intimate with the Dawsons and very likely danced the minuet at an assembly or a "birthnight" with this parson's wife in her London finery.

In spite of laws and regulations, wills and inventories show that the Virginia planter and his family had all the rich fabrics that were fashionable across the water, as well as the coarser stuffs manufactured for the poor man's raiment. Among silk materials frequently named are sarcenet, which was used principally for lining, but also for mantles and gowns; tabby, which was watered;

<sup>2</sup> *William and Mary College Quarterly*, vi, 124.



ELIZABETH LANDON  
*Second wife of Robert "King" Carter*





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## DRESS

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damask, which was flowered; ducape, which was corded; Persian, which was flowered or "sprigged"; taffeta, heavier than the modern fabric of that name; Paduasoy, a rich, smooth silk originally made in Padua; lutestring, a plain silk widely used, and tiffany.<sup>2</sup> Satin, plush and velvet were also imported as were several rich materials in which silk and wool or silk and flax were combined. Broadcloth was much used, and other handsome woollen fabrics were callimanco, prunella, a heavy material used for petticoats, mantles, and women's shoes and drugget. A cheaper stuff was paragon, which was frequently red in color and used for bodices. Cotton and linen fabrics were India calico and cherridary, chintz, dimity, holland, blue linen, dowlas, and lockram. Durable stuffs for men's wear were serge, kersey, sagathy, fearnought, frieze, and duffels. For hardest wear leather breeches were often worn. Oznaburgs and canvas were coarse linen materials imported in large quantities for shirts, jackets, and breeches for rough wear, and for the clothing of slaves. Spinning and weaving were done on every plantation, and homespun was much worn by everybody in the earliest days, and always on the frontier and among the poorer classes.

The planters imported all sorts of goods by the piece and stored them away in chests to be made up into garments as needed. In 1650 William Presley bequeathed to his son, with "one of his best suits of clothes," a cloth cloak, and "a piece of Lockram," and in 1675 Robert Beckingham, of Lancaster County, left his father, in England, "all the finest broadcloth bought of Mr. John Boshier except as much as shall make my wife one suit."

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<sup>2</sup> For many of the definitions of names of materials and articles of dress given I am indebted to Alice Morse Earle's "Costume of Colonial Times."

Gay colors were popular for women and men—"sky color," sea-green, olive and scarlet being favorite shades. Women wore mantles of crimson taffeta and hooded cloaks called "cardinals" made of scarlet cloth. Perhaps this fashion was set by Little Red Ridinghood. Mrs. Sarah Willoughby, of Lower Norfolk, might have made a rainbow out of her varied wardrobe in 1675. She had petticoats of red, blue, and black silk, one of Indian silk, one of worsted prunella, one of striped linen and one of calico, a black gown, a scarlet waistcoat with a silver lace, a striped stuff jacket, a worsted prunella mantle, a sky-colored satin bodice, a pair of red paragon bodices, three fine and three coarse holland aprons, and two hoods.<sup>3</sup>

The petticoat was, of course, not an undergarment, but a skirt—often of the richest material or elaborately decorated—with which was worn a parted or looped-up overdress. In 1668 Mrs. William Brown had, in a chest containing "all necessary cloaths & Lynnen for a gent woman," a taffeta petticoat, a tabby petticoat, a baize petticoat, and a scarlet petticoat with gold lace.

In 1738 Mrs. George Charlton, mantuamaker, of Williamsburg, through the advertising columns of the *Gazette*, offered "her services to the ladies" whom she would "undertake to oblige with the newest and genteelest fashions now wore in England." In 1766 a Williamsburg tailor advertised that he could make ladies' riding habits. In the same year "Katherine Rathall, a milliner, lately arrived from London," opened shop in Fredericksburg and advertised in the *Gazette*:

"Best flowered and plain satins, flowered and plain modes, sarcenets and Persians; flowered, striped, and plain

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<sup>3</sup> Bruce's "Economic History of Va. in the 17th Century," ii, 194.

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## DRESS

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English gauze, a great variety of blonde, minionet, thread and black lace, joining blondes for ladies' caps and handkerchiefs, wedding and other fans, a great variety of ribands, French beads and earrings, ladies' caps, fly caps and lappets, egrets of all sorts, silk and leather gloves and mits, summer hats and cloaks, cardinals, French tippets, black gauze and catgut love ribands for mournings, silk, thread and cotton stockings for ladies and gentlemen, gentlemen's laced ruffles, bags for wigs and solitaires, Irish linens and tapes in variety, garnet, Bristol stone and pearl sleeve buttons set in silver, garnet and gold brooches, a variety of silver shoe-buckles in the newest fashion for ladies and gentlemen, with knee-buckles for the latter . . . and sundry other articles too tedious to mention."

What "gauze and catgut love ribands for mourning" were I have failed to discover, so leave them to the gentle reader's imagination. A "solitaire" was not a diamond ring, but a broad black ribbon worn loosely about the neck by gentlemen of fashion.

Other Virginia shops offered as varied and interesting stocks. One in Williamsburg advertised, in 1766, with other appealing articles, cardinals and cloaks made of flowered satin and spotted mode, white satin and callimanco pumps for ladies, paste shoe, knee, and stock buckles, a very neat and genteel assortment of wedding, mourning and second mourning fans, and breast flowers "equal in beauty to any ever imported and so near resembles nature that the nicest eye can hardly distinguish the difference."

The men were not behind the women in their love of gay apparel. Gold and silver laced hats and broadcloth coats with gold or silver buttons appear over and over again in wills and inventories of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Cloth, silk, and trimmings were made to last in the good old days. Persons of all ranks in making their wills disposed of their clothing, and in the inventories articles of dress were carefully appraised. A husband usually graciously bequeathed his wife "her own" clothes and jewels, and distributed his masculine belongings among male relatives and friends. In 1674 John Lee's will named a gray suit trimmed with silver buttons and a pair of gloves with silk tops. In 1674 James Sampson bequeathed to a fair legatee a sky-colored watered tabby gown and a round black scarf trimmed with Flanders lace, with a blue and a red silk sash to two of his heirs male. In 1686 Matthew Bentley, a prosperous shoemaker of Middlesex County, bequeathed to John Willis his "broadcloth coat with gold buttons on it," and in 1716 William Fox of Lancaster County left to William and James Ball, relatives of the mother of Washington, his broadcloth suit trimmed with gold lace, his new silk suit, his new beaver hat and silk stockings.

Upon the death of Doctor Alexander Mattheson, in 1756, one of his friends was the happy heir to a flowered plush jacket.

In 1761 Washington, in ordering clothes from London, wrote the merchant,

"I want neither lace nor embroidery. Plain clothes with gold or silver buttons if worn in genteel dress are all that I desire." For Madam Washington he ordered a salmon colored tabby velvet with a pattern of satin flowers, to be made into a sack and coat; a cap, handkerchief, tucker and ruffles, to be made of Brussels or point lace, and to cost twenty pounds; two fine flowered lawn aprons, two double handkerchiefs, two pairs of white silk, six pairs of fine cotton and four pairs of thread hose, one pair of black



JOHN PARKE AND MARTHA PARKE CUSTIS

Washington's stepchildren



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## DRESS

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and one pair of white satin shoes, "of the smallest fives," four pairs of callimanco shoes, one fashionable hat or bonnet, six pairs of best kid gloves, six pairs of mitts, one dozen knots and breast-knots, one dozen round silk stay-laces, one black mask, one dozen "most fashionable" cambric pocket handkerchiefs, pins and hairpins, six pounds of perfumed powder, a "puckered petticoat of fashionable color," a silver tabby velvet petticoat, two handsome breast flowers, and some sugar candy.

In 1765 young Edward Hawtry, who was contemplating applying for the place of master of the grammar school of William and Mary, was informed by a former professor of the college that he would need in Williamsburg "one suit of handsome full dress silk clothes to wear on the King's birthday, at the Governor's."

In 1769 Lord Botetourt summoned the House of Burgesses to meet him in the Council Chamber to discuss weighty affairs of state and received them in "a suit of plain scarlet"—plain evidently meaning without gold or silver lace. In this year Mrs. Katherine Rathall advertised "black, blue and buff silk for gentlemen's breeches," and "macaroni waistcoats."

The colonists were plentifully supplied with shoes, gloves, and hats, of as striking appearance as the rest of their clothing. Many wills and inventories of the seventeenth century mention beaver hats with silver hatbands, and in the eighteenth the beavor or castor—another name for beaver—remained in fashion and was to be had at Virginia stores. In 1737 Williamsburg could boast of a hat-maker who could supply "Men's Beavers of any Fashion or Size, Woman's Beavers, White, Black, Shagged or otherwise, and Castors of the best and neatest Sort." For lighter wear there were palmetto and "Carolina" hats

and—for women—“ cane and silk hats and French flowers for trimming them.” Women also wore, in both centuries, handsome silk hoods, and, in the eighteenth, calash bonnets. In 1769 Mrs. Rathall imported for their use “ blue, green and white riding hats.”

Shoes were imported and made at home in large quantities. In 1653 the demand for shoes was so great that ships bound for Virginia were permitted to carry a hundred and fifty dozen shoes and their full number of passengers. Besides their be-ribboned and buckled shoes men wore jack-boots for rough service, and especially for riding. Women's and children's shoes were made of prunella, callimanco, damask, silk, and velvet, as well as of morocco, Spanish and other leathers. In 1737 William Beverley ordered from London, for his wife, six pairs of flowered damask shoes and for each of his young daughters, Elizabeth and Ursula, six pairs of callimanco and one pair of silk shoes. At the same time he ordered “ three fine thin calf skins and two skins of white leather ” to be made up at home into shoes for his children.

Men's gloves were most frequently made of buckskin and gloves and mitts for women and children of kid, lamb-skin, silk, and thread. Stockings were of silk, wool, cotton, and thread, and of every color of the rainbow. Green stockings are very often mentioned in wills and inventories.

Women wore masks to preserve their complexions in Virginia, as in England, and black patches for the piquancy of expression they were supposed to bestow, and both masks and black court plaster were sold in colonial shops.

Even in The Valley finery was not unknown. In 1747 Robert Bratton and James Kirk testified at Augusta County Court that they had been robbed of an “ orange



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## DRESS

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colored sitting gown, a pale China gown, a striped blue and white cotton gown, a petticoat, a light colored broadcloth coat, two beaver hats, a black velvet cap, a blue jacket of home-made cloth, a hat of Bermuda plat with red ribbon band."

In 1761 Robert McClanahan testified that he had lost a sword mounted with silver and a sword-knot and belt, the whole valued at eight pounds, and Alexander McClanahan that he had lost a silver-hilted sword which was also worth eight pounds.

Advertisements of runaway servants and slaves furnish many points on the dress of the day. They were occasionally clad in fearnought or oznaburghs, but were oftener wondrously arrayed. Whether their garments were stolen from, or discarded by, their masters, or were their own holiday clothes it is impossible to say. In 1766 the *Virginia Gazette* advertised a woman runaway who when last seen had on "a striped red and white callimanco gown, a short white linen sack and petticoat, a pair of stays with a fringed blue riband, a large pair of silver buckles and a pair of silver bobs"—an old name for earrings. In 1768 one runaway convict servant wore "a blue coat with metal buttons, a scarlet jacket, and red plush breeches," and another a light colored wig, fine hat with black riband and metal buckle around the crown, a blue surtout or Newmarket coat, a claret colored coat and jacket, buckskin breeches and very bad shoes," while still another is described as "extremely fond of dress, but his holiday clothes were taken from him when he first attempted to get off."

In 1775 a negro ran away in a "light colored Wilton coat, a beaver cloth great coat and red plush breeches."

There were no special fashions for children past their babyhood. They dressed as their parents did and looked

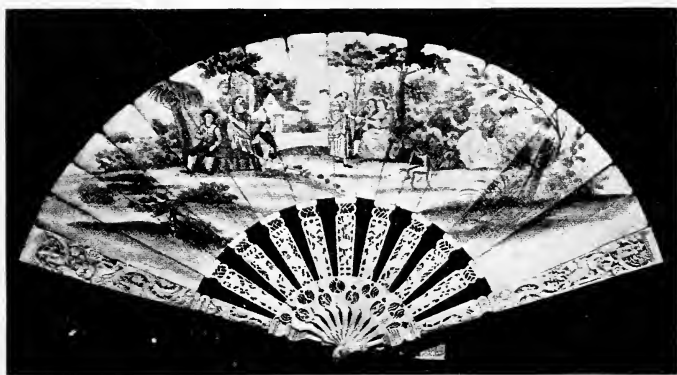
like diminutive, quaint grown folk. In 1736 when Robert Carter of "Nomini" was ten years old there were ordered for him from London a suit of fine brown holland, a laced hat, white gloves, and red worsted stockings, and for his little sister Betty a gown of fine sprigged calico, Spanish leather shoes, and a mask. When Miss Betty was fourteen her guardian bought for her a cap, ruffles and tucker, a pair of white stays, eight pairs of white and two pairs of colored gloves, two pairs of worsted and three pairs of thread hose, one pair of morocco, four pairs of Spanish leather, and two pairs of calf shoes, a mask, a fan, a necklace, a girdle and buckle, a piece of "fashionable calico," four yards of ribbon "for knots," a "hoop-coat," a hat, a "mantua," and coat of "slite lute string."

Soon after Washington's marriage to Martha Custis he ordered from London for his little stepson "Master Custis, eight years old," "a handsome suit" of winter clothes, a suit of summer clothes, two pieces of nankeen with trimmings, a silver laced hat, six pairs of fine cotton and one pair of worsted stockings, four pairs of strong shoes, one pair of neat pumps, one pair of gloves, two hair-bags and one piece (a bolt) of hair ribbon, a pair of shoe and knee buckles, a pair of sleeve buttons. Also "a small Bible neatly bound in Turkey and John Parke Custis wrote in gilt letters on the inside of the cover; a neat small Prayer Book bound as above, with John Parke Custis as above."

Little "Master Custis" had been given a negro boy to wait upon him, and for him were ordered three pairs of shoes, three pairs of coarse stockings, a suit of livery clothes and a hat for a boy fourteen years old. Colonel Washington took pains to direct that the livery for his stepson's servant should be "suited to the Arms of the Custis family."



MARTHA CUSTIS'S WATCH



EVELYN BYRD'S FAN



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## DRESS

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For little "Miss Custis, six years old," he ordered a coat made of fashionable silk, a fashionable cap or filet, a bib-apron, lace trimmed ruffles and tucker, four fashionable dresses of lawn, two fine cambric frocks, a satin capuchin, hat and neckatees, a Persian quilted coat, a pair of pack-thread stays, four pairs of callimanco and six pairs of leather shoes, two pairs of satin shoes with flat ties, six pairs of fine cotton and four pairs of white worsted stockings, twelve pairs of mitts and six pairs of white kid gloves, one pair of silver shoe-buckles, one pair of neat sleeve buttons, six handsome egrets, different sorts, six yards of ribbon for egrets "a small Bible bound in Turkey and Martha Parke Custis wrote on the inside in gilt letters, a small Prayer Book, neat and in the same manner, and a very good spinet."

With all of this paraphernalia, including a pair of stays, a variety of handsome egrets for the hair, a piano, and a morocco-bound Bible and Prayer Book, the little girl was to have a fashionably dressed doll to cost a guinea, another to cost five shillings, and "a box of gingerbread toys, sugar images and comfits."

In 1770 William Nelson, of Yorktown, wrote to John Norton that the revenue acts had taught the colonists that they could make many things themselves and do without many others that they used to indulge in. He adds:

"I now wear a good suit of cloth of my son's wool, manufactured as well as my shirts, in Albemarle, my shoes, hose, buckles, wigg & hat etc., of our own country, and in these we improve every year in Quantity as well as Quality."

JEWELS

What has become of the jewels that were in Colonial Virginia? Have most of them gone to the land of lost pins and hairpins—wherever that may be—or are such as have survived two wars and innumerable fires cherished as heirlooms by the descendants of their original owners who are scattered through every quarter of the world? Some of them can still be traced, of course, but these are an infinitesimal proportion of what are known to have existed. Wills and inventories that remain fairly bristle with silver and jewelled hatbands, mourning rings, seal rings with coats-of-arms, shoe, knee, and stock-buckles, watches, lockets, hair ornaments, and snuff-boxes, and name a goodly number of diamond rings and earrings, and pearl necklaces, and an occasional diamond necklace, and this notwithstanding the fact that many a wealthy man, like Colonel John Tayloe of “Mt. Airy,” simply leaves his wife “all her jewels,” without giving any indication as to what they were. Many of the portraits of the time show handsome jewels.

The mourning ring, which was in fashion in both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, had generally inscribed within it the name or initials of the person for whose sake it was worn and sometimes a motto known as a “posy.” Many of them were plain gold, others more or less ornate and frequently cost a handsome sum. Black enamel or diamonds or a combination of both, or a tiny lock of braided hair—under glass, and sometimes surrounded by diamond “sparks” or by pearls—were favorite decorations for them. The inventory of Edmund Berkeley—1719—mentions a hair ring with twelve sparks marked E.B., and one with eight sparks marked N.B., besides twelve other mourning rings not described in detail. In 1736 the *Gazette*

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## DRESS

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advertised as "lost" a mourning ring, with a black enamelled cross between four sparks, inscribed "H. Ludwell, vid, 4 Aprilis, 1731. Æt. 52." In 1758 Mrs. Margaret Downman, of Richmond County, bequeathed to each of her four sons "a gold ring of a guinea value, inscribed with her initials and the posy 'Prepared be to follow me.'"

By 1765 the fashion of giving mourning rings had gone over the mountains to The Valley. In that year John Mitchell bequeathed "an ancient family white stone ring set in gold" to Miss Jennie McClanahan, and to five of his other friends "a plain mourning golden ring each."

Less frequently mentioned was the mourning brooch which almost always preserved a lock of hair. There are in existence a mourning ring in the form of a hoop of diamonds memorializing William Lightfoot, of "Tedington," who died in 1764, and two brooches surrounded with diamonds memorializing his wife, Mildred Lightfoot.

Wedding and betrothal rings also contained posies. For instance, in 1736 Edward Moseley, of Norfolk County, bequeathed a seal ring with his "coat-of-arms on it" and his mother's wedding ring "with a posey in it." An unfortunate dame advertising in the *Virginia Gazette* in 1739 was the loser of a green silk purse in which was a plain gold ring with the posy "Let love increase to crown our peace." A lost locket advertised in 1769 was doubtless a *gage d'amour*, and not a badge of mourning. It contained a lock of "dark hair wrought in a cipher R. T., on the one side and the imitation of a landscape set around with garnets on the other." The landscape was doubtless done in enamel.

It is possible to give here but a few examples from a multitude of bequests of jewels, and as some of the most valuable of these are from the very few records of the early

days of the colony which have escaped destruction, there is no telling what the great mass of lost wills and inventories might have disclosed.

Among extremely early owners of rich jewels in Virginia were the Piersey girls, daughters of Abraham Piersey, of his Majesty's Council. In 1625 Mrs. Elizabeth Draper, of London, left to her granddaughter Elizabeth Piersey in the far-away colony "one diamond ring," and to Mary "one diamond ring set after the Dutch fashion."

In 1650 Mrs. Susanna Moseley, of Lower Norfolk, sold to Mrs. Frances Yeardley, for some cattle, a gold hat-band, enamelled, and set with diamonds, bought in Holland for five hundred gelders, a "jewel" of gold—probably a pendant—enamelled, and set with diamonds, worth thirty gelders, and a diamond ring. In a letter she explained that she would not part with her jewels but for her "great want of cattle," but had rather Mrs. Yeardley would wear them than "any other gentlewoman in the country," and wished her "health and prosperity to wear them." Mrs. Moseley also had a ruby, a sapphire, and an emerald ring.

Mrs. Yeardley had other costly jewels, for in her will made in 1657—the year of her death—she directed that her "best diamond necklace and jewel" should be sent to England to be sold, and the money they brought spent on six diamond rings to be given to six of her friends, and two black marble tombstones to be placed over her grave and that of the second of her three husbands, Captain John Gookin; by whose side she wished to be buried. Whether or not this mistress of a plantation in a then remote section of the sparsely settled colony had a *second best* diamond necklace this witness will not undertake to say, but the inference is she had. Her tomb bought with





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MRS. JOHN TAYLOE AND DAUGHTER MARY  
Afterward Mrs. Mann Page. About 1756



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## DRESS

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part of the "best diamond necklace" could be seen within recent years in Lynnhaven Parish Churchyard. It declared that beneath it lay "Ye body of Capt. John Gooking and also ye body of Mrs. Sarah Yardley, who was wife to Capt. Adani Thorowgood, Capt. John Gooking & Collonell Francis Yardley."

In 1669 Colonel John Carter, of "Corotoman," left his wife Elizabeth *her* necklace of pearls and diamonds, and to his son Robert "his mother's hoop ring and crystal necklace."

In 1673 Mrs. Amory Butler bequeathed to various heirs her wedding ring, two of her biggest stone rings, her blue enamelled ring, two mourning rings, her small diamond ring, her biggest diamond ring, her necklace with the biggest pearls, her small pearl necklace, her silver bodkin and her gilded bodkin, a pair of silver buttons, and a pair of silver buckles. A bodkin was in those days an ornamental hairpin.

In 1677 Mrs. Elizabeth Howe, of London, who was an ancestress of General Lee, left to her granddaughter Henrietta Maria Hill, of "Shirley," on James River, a "necklace of pearle," to Sara Hill "a rose diamond ring," to Elizabeth Hill "a table diamond ring," and to her daughter, Mrs. Edward Hill, the mother of these girls, "a gold seal ring."

Among quaint bequests in the will of Mrs. Elizabeth Eppes, in 1678, were two "stone rings" and a "thumb ring."

In 1687 Thomas Pitt, of Isle of Wight County, bequeathed to his "deare and lovinge wife," Mary, with "all her wearing apparel," her wedding ring, two diamond rings, an enamelled ring, and a necklace of pearls. The question naturally arises wherewithal would a poor widow

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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have been clothed in good old times when even her wedding ring was not her own, had her husband neglected to give her in his last will and testament "her wearing apparel"?

According to the inventory of Colonel Edward Digges he left in 1692 eight gold mourning rings, one diamond ring, a small stone ring and "a parcel of sea pearls."

The inventory of Edmund Berkeley, 1718-19, mentions, besides the interesting mourning rings already described, a large gold ring, a "set of ruby bobs," two necklaces of very fine, small beads, forty-four small silver buttons, and a necklace of five strings of small pearls.

In 1706 Madam Frances Spencer, wife of Colonel Nicholas Spencer, Secretary of State of Virginia, gave her daughter a pearl necklace valued at eighty pounds sterling—equal to at least a thousand dollars to-day.

In 1726 Robert ("King") Carter directed in his will that thirty pounds be paid for a gold watch and twenty-five pounds for a pearl necklace for his daughter Mary when she should arrive at the age of sixteen, and that diamond earrings to cost fifty pounds sterling be imported for his daughter Elizabeth, the wife of Doctor George Nicholas. He directed that thirty of his friends be presented with mourning rings.

In 1742-43 William Randolph, of "Tuckahoe," bequeathed to his daughter Judith the "rings and trinkets which were her mother's," and to his younger daughter, Mary, two hundred pounds sterling "to be laid out in such trinkets as her guardians shall think fit."

In 1747 John Grymes left a diamond ring worth fifty guineas to the Right Honorable Horatio Walpole, an uncle of the famous Horace, as an acknowledgment of favors done him in England.

In 1751 Colonel Thomas Bray, of James City County,

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## DRESS

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left a set of silver knee and shoe buckles, a silver collar for a waiting man, a pair of gold sleeve buttons, and "about twenty gold rings, several of them set with valuable stones."

In 1764 William Lightfoot, of "Tedington," left, with many other luxurious possessions, a miniature of himself in a gold frame ornamented with a bow-knot of diamonds, also a gold snuff-box with a miniature of his wife inside.

There seem to have been quite well stocked jewelry stores in the colony during the eighteenth century. In 1737 Alexander Kerr, of Williamsburg, advertised in the *Gazette* a collection of jewels to be sold by lottery during the October Court. There were to be four hundred tickets, eighty of which would draw prizes. Each prize would consist of a group of trinkets, and among the articles in the various groups described were diamond, emerald, ruby, amethyst, and garnet rings, earrings, studs, seals, buckles, and snuff-boxes.

The earliest mention of a watch in my notes is in 1697 when Richard Aubrey, of Essex County, bequeathed two silver seals, one of which had been his grandfather's, and his "Dudelum watch." There may have been others in the seventeenth century, and certain it is that there were plenty of them in the eighteenth. Leroy George, of Richmond County, bequeathed one as early as 1700, and Tobias Mickleborough, of Middlesex, another in 1702, and from that time on gold and silver watches were frequent bequests.

An especially interesting watch was that presented by Daniel Parke Custis to his seventeen-year-old bride, Martha Dandridge, who was later the wife of George Washington. Soon after his marriage Mr. Custis wrote his agent in London:

"I desire a handsome watch for my wife, a pattern like the one you bought for Mrs. Burwell, with her name

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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around the dial. There are just twelve letters in her name, Martha Custis, a letter for each hour marked on the dial-plate."

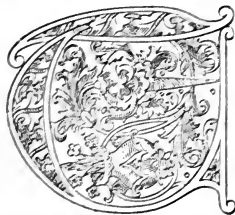
The watch, which is preserved at Washington's headquarters at Newburg-on-the-Hudson, has an open-faced, gold case, inlaid with white enamel, and around the dial—a letter over each numeral—may be read the name, M A R T H A C U S T I S .

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## VII

# VIRGINIA AND ENGLAND

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THE Colonial Virginian thought and spoke of England as "home." With no means of communication save the primitive sailing vessels of the time, intercourse with the Mother Country was far more intimate than now with fast steamers, the Atlantic cable, and wireless telegraphy. This was, in part, of course, the result of being under one government, but it was even more by reason of close business, social, and family ties.

The settlement of Virginia had introduced into the world's market an entirely new product—tobacco—which caused as sensational a development of trade along a hitherto unknown line in the seventeenth century as the automobile has in the twentieth, and the colonists soon realized that though they had not found gold they had that for which men were willing to exchange gold—which was as good for supplying the necessities of life and more, the luxuries that add to the enjoyment of life.

So fascinating did the new weed prove that it was difficult to grow it fast enough to satisfy the consumer across the sea. It is said that when Doctor James Blair was pleading for a charter for William and Mary College for the sake of the souls of the Virginians, the English Attorney General sent back the answer,

"Damn your souls, plant tobacco!"

As the more of it they planted the more comfort in the way of English-made goods appeared in their homes, tobacco became and remained Virginia's principal staple—the planter's chief source of income—and created constant

business intercourse with Great Britain. Every substantial planter had one or more merchants in England or Scotland to whom he regularly shipped his crop for sale with a bill of lading like this:

“ Shipped by the grace of God in Good order & well conditioned by John Fitz Randolph in & upon the Good ship Called the Constant Endeavor whereof is Master under God for this present Voyage John Pawling & now riding at Anchor in the River Rappahannock & by God's Grace bound for the port of London, to say Tenn hogsheads of Virginia Tobacco . . . and so God send the Good shipp to her desired port in Safety. Amen. Dated in Virginia the 17th of October '74.”

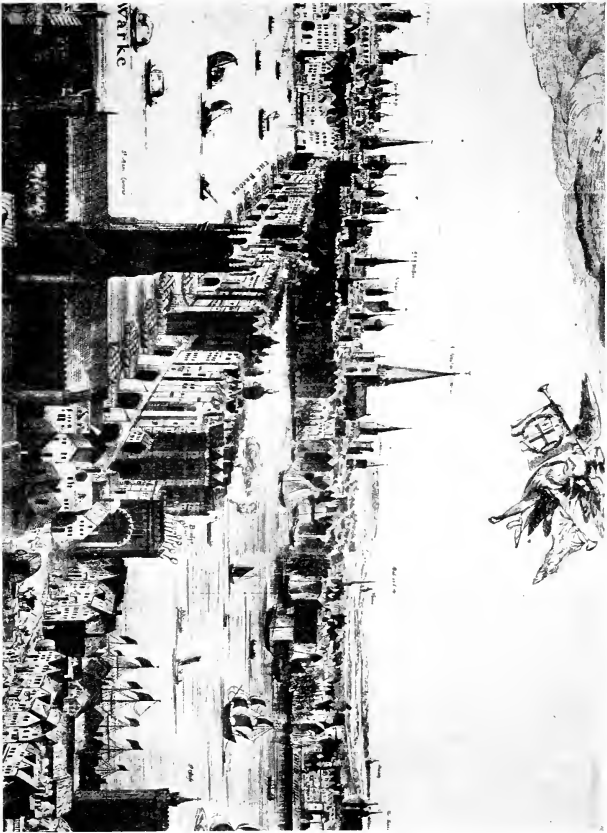
Another frequent conclusion was “ God send the good ship in safety to the haven where she would be.”

With his precious crop the shipper sent orders for purchases in infinite variety, from tacks to thoroughbred horses, and the merchant acted as his purchasing agent—buying the articles named from the retailers in London, Glasgow, or elsewhere, and speeding them on their way to Virginia, accompanied by his own general account and the retailer's bills, or “ shop-bills ” as they were called. A number of these shop-bills have been preserved in old family papers, and possibly there may yet be tucked away in the pigeon-hole of some ancient desk a Chippendale shop-bill.

The last order sent by Martha Custis to her London merchant before she became Mrs. Washington, was for purchases for her family and plantation to the value of £309.8.5, and it would be difficult to name any article of ordinary use not contained in it. Three months before she had imported goods worth £103.15.5.

Mrs. Custis shipped her tobacco to Hanbury and Com-





OLD LONDON, THE MOTHER OF VIRGINIA  
From Vischer's view, 1616



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## VIRGINIA AND ENGLAND

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pany, Quakers, who were great merchants of London. On October 1, 1759, they sent the newly-wedded Washington this quaint expression of good will:

“ Esteemed Friend:

“ We are favored with Thine of June 12th, informing us of Thy marriage with our friend Martha Custis, upon which circumstance we heartily congratulate you both & wish you a great deal of happiness.”

Some planters made a point of not buying anything in Virginia if they could possibly help it. George Lee, of Westmoreland, directed in his will in 1761 that “the goods, clothes and tools wanted for the use of the negroes and plantations may be yearly sent for to England and none purchased in the Country but what there is an absolute necessity for.”

Sometimes, it seems, wives of London merchants would, as an especial favor, shop for the wives of Virginia planters. In 1737 one of these—Mrs. Elizabeth Perry—wrote to Mrs. Thomas Jones, of Williamsburg:

“ I am very glad what I do for my friends in Virginia pleases them. I have done my best endeavors that Misses things should be what she likes, for a walking gown I have bought a Turkey Burdet for I thought a Cery dery had too mean a look and tho' what I have sent is something dearer it will answer it in the wear, as for the piece of sprigged muslin you wish for there is no such thing for the money you allow. I have been, or sent, all over the town and there is none to be got under double the price, so have not sent you any.”

An entry in Colonel James Gordon's diary tells us that he had been “busy all day writing letters to England.”

Every extensive planter seems to have kept copies of his letters in a book provided for the purpose, and these

letters and the replies show that correspondence between Virginians and their London merchants—often continuing through years—resulted in business friendships which sometimes grew into intimacies. The writers exchanged presents and bits of news and gossip and the merchants looked after the planters' sons when they were sent abroad to be educated and were hospitable to the planters themselves when they crossed the sea. Charles Goore, a Liverpool merchant, writing to Theodorick Bland, Sr., of Virginia, in 1758, acknowledged a "kind present of hams and peach brandy" which were "very good," and a red bird which "died" on the way. In 1765 Mr. Bland thanks a merchant for "eight very fine pineapples," and in 1767 John Hall, merchant of London, thanks Mr. Bland for some "exceeding fine" hams, and sends him in return "a cag of new red herrings."

Hams and tobacco were the most frequent presents from Virginians to friends and relatives in England throughout the period, and doubtless none could have been more acceptable. In 1689 C. Calthorpe sent his relative, James Calthorpe, of East Barsham, in Suffolk, Eng., "two Rowles of Chawing tobacco" which he declared "upon his word to be the best."

Various other characteristic gifts were sent "home." In 1686 William Byrd, the first, wrote to his friend, John Clinton, "According to your desire I have herewith sent you an Indian Habitt for your Boy, the best I could procure amongst our neighbor Indians." This included a "flap"—drapery worn about the waist—"a pair of moccasins, or Indian shoes, also some shells to put about his neck and a cap of wampum"—all of which were sent in an Indian basket with "a bow and arrows tyed to itt." The happy little English boy who received this present was possibly the first white child who ever "played Indian."

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## VIRGINIA AND ENGLAND

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Virginia seeds and plants were often sent across the ocean as presents. In 1690 Colonel Byrd wrote to Thomas Wetherold that he had saved him many seeds, but all had been ruined except the ones he sent—namely, “Poppeas Arbor, Rhus Sentisei folius, Sassafras and Laurus Tulipifera.”

In 1730 the distinguished naturalist, Catesby, wrote his niece, Mrs. Thomas Jones, that he was sending her the instalments of his “Natural History” and that Virginia cones, acorns, and seeds—“especially of poplar, cypress and some long white walnut”—would be acceptable to him. There is still in existence in Virginia a copy of Catesby’s work sent by him to John Clayton, the botanist.

Dwellers in the faraway colony were ever eager for home news. In 1690 Byrd said in a letter to his brother-in-law, Daniel Horsmanden:

“Wee are here at ye end of ye world & Europe may bee turned topsy turvy ere wee can hear a word of it; but when news comes wee have it whole sale, very often more than the truth.”

Eighty years later Roger Atkinson wrote to Robert Bunn, merchant of London:

“Pray send me the newspapers & magazines & Political Registers, regularly. . . . I never desire to read anything else except an Almanack, a Prayer Book and a Bible.” And in the same year another London merchant, Edward Brown, wrote to Thomas Adams:

“Junius has wrote his last letter which being a very bold one, addressed to the K-g, has made a great noise. I intend to send it to you by Mr. Mosse who goes in Capt. Walker’s ship.”

Sometimes correspondence between Virginians and their relatives at home was kept up continuously for many

years—as in the case of George Home or Hume, of Wedderburn, whose letters to and from his family in Scotland have been published.<sup>1</sup>

A great part of the business done for and by Virginians in London was transacted at the “Virginia Coffee House” and on the “Virginia Walk” in the Exchange. This coffee house was a favorite gathering place for visitors from the colony, and provided them with a sort of club. In 1685 William Fitzhugh wrote a cousin in London:

“Upon the Exchange in the Virginia Walk, you’ll meet Mr. Cooper, a Virginia merchant, who will take care of and convey your letters to me.”

In 1769 Captain Robert Stewart, a regular correspondent of Washington’s, in London, sent his letters to the Virginia Coffee House to be forwarded.

And now for a bit of gossip, plenty of which was heard at the Coffee House. John Pratt, writing from London in 1725 to his sister-in-law, the much courted widow, Mrs. Elizabeth Pratt, says:

“Mr. Robert Cary, last Thursday in the Virg’a Coffee House told me, publicly, yt he had letters from several in Virg’a yt you wer certainly to be married to Mr. Thom Jones, Col. Bird was there present.”

And Mrs. Pratt certainly was married to Mr. Jones very soon thereafter. A few months later she had another letter from her gossipy brother-in-law in London in which he told her that “Colo Spotswood was married about a month ago to a daughter of Mr. Braine who was formerly Stewart of Chelsea College,” and added:


“Ye young lady is said to be wonderfully pretty, but no money.”

While business took large numbers of Virginians to

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<sup>1</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. and Biog., xx, 381, etc.


N<sup>o</sup> 637  
 Geo. Hunt Esq<sup>r</sup> & Co<sup>s</sup> London July 20<sup>th</sup> 1770



Bought of Samuel Wittman  
 GOLD SMITH & JEWELLER  
 at the Sun opposite Lawrence Lane, Chappinide?

RC N<sup>o</sup> 4

1 Open Cluster Brilliant Ring fine	£ 17. 9. 7
1 Brilliant Deep Ring fine	12 12
	£ 30. 9



Mr. Rob<sup>t</sup> Cary & Co<sup>s</sup> London Sep<sup>r</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> 1768

Bought of James Lowers at the  
 Violin German Flute and Hautboy  
 facing New Broad Street Moorfields.

two Doz of Superfine 1<sup>st</sup> 1/2 threads

one Doz of 2<sup>d</sup> 20

1/2 Doz of 3<sup>d</sup> 20

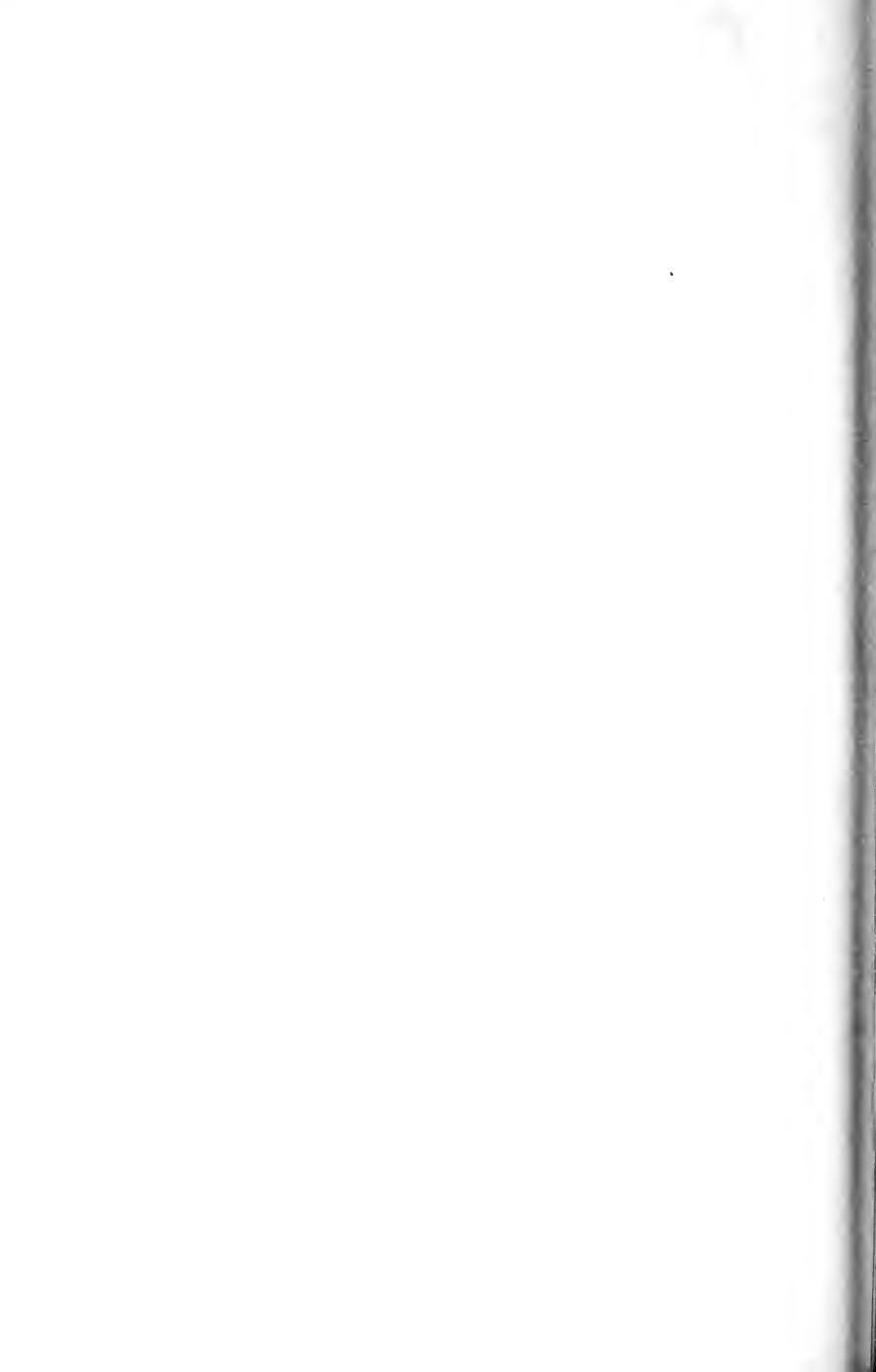
3 Rings of Silver Babs

1/2 Doz of best Bridges

pc

LONDON SHOP BILLS

For goods for Virginians





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## VIRGINIA AND ENGLAND

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Great Britain, others went for pleasure or improvement in health. They frequented the theatres, and Bath was to them, as to the English, a sort of Atlantic City of the time to which they resorted both for physical benefit and diversion. Young Samuel Griffin, of Williamsburg, was there in October, 1771, and in a letter to Thomas Adams in London, said:

“Bath is at this time very full of company, though very few handsome Men and Women and no Fortunes worth making a Bold Stroak for. . . . We have at this time four Balls a week though I think they can't be supported as most of the Company think Two enough. The new rooms have Mondays and Thursdays with Concerts on Wednesdays and generally very full.”

In the same year Mr. Adams had a letter from Isaac Hall, a Virginia student of medicine at Edinburgh, showing the writer's familiarity with London theatres.

“I have enjoyed,” said he, “as good spirits as can be expected from one who lately left your Playhouses, &c, to become a retired, sedentary student in Edin'h. But however heroically I may bear the want of such sublime entertainments, I can't forbear enquiring after them, has Garrick, the Pride and Boast of the Theatrical world, appeared, & what characters?—has Barry yet recovered his health? does his lady retain all her power of terrifying, reforming & melting the Audiences, and does she shew herself often—& Mrs. Yates?”

It is likely that the only acquaintances of most Virginians visiting England whose families had been in the colony for several generations were the merchants, but those who were born in the mother-land or had kept in touch with their kinsfolk there had a far wider circle. Among these was Mr. Thomas Jones who during a visit

to England when a young man was fortunate enough to receive a gracious invitation from Margaret, Lady Culpeper, wife of Lord Culpeper, who had been Governor of Virginia, and was a friend of young Jones's father—Captain Roger Jones. Here is the invitation:

Leeds Castle, December the 19th, 1706.

Sir

I received yrs of the 14 instant and am glad of your safe arrival in England. I hope you are come upon a good account that will turn to your advantage. I shall be very glad to see you here if it is no prejudice to your business and you shall be very wellcome when you please to come. . . .

My daughter and her seven children are all very well this is all from

Sir

Your affectionate friend & servant

MAR. CULPEPER.

It is addressed:

For Mr. Thomas Jones  
at the Virginia Coffee house  
at London.

It is interesting to recall that in the course of time Leeds Castle became the property of an emigrant to Virginia—Lord Fairfax—who inherited it from his grandfather, Lord Culpeper. He erected at Leeds a sun-dial so ingeniously contrived that it showed the time of day both there and at “Belvoir,” the Fairfax home in Virginia.

Another lucky youth was Peyton Skipwith, who at the age of twenty—and the year before he became Sir Peyton Skipwith, Bart.—went to England to see the sweetheart who was later his wife. While on a visit to Bath he was taken ill—he feared hopelessly—but was prevailed on by his “good friend Mr. Hanbury Williams” to go with him to his seat, “Coldbrooke,” in Wales, where he recovered his health. In a letter written from “Coldbrooke” to

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## VIRGINIA AND ENGLAND

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Theodorick Bland, Jr., of Virginia—then a student at the University of Edinburgh—young Skipwith says his host is “heir to the great Mr. Charles H. Williams, and lives like a prince in a most agreeable house that was his, furnished in a more elegant manner than any house I have ever been in.”

The Hanbury Williams family was one of great wealth and social prominence, but for all their grandeur and their kindness their guest from over the water seems to have been a bit homesick. He entreats Bland:

“Pray don’t be so devilish concise and lazy, but write me all the news. . . . Pray make my comp’ts to your cousin and his good family, Col. Ludwell and his, Mr. Dinwiddie and his and all other acquaintances, not forgetting Mr. Burwell and his family. Pray, if you hear any Virginia news don’t forget to mention it.”

In 1726 Colonel William Byrd, the second, returned to “Westover” from a long visit to England where his daughters Evelyn, a nineteen-year-old girl of flower-like beauty, and Wilhemina, a child of ten, had been made much of in high society. Soon afterward he wrote to John, Lord Boyle, son of his intimate friend the Earl of Orrery, whose guests he and his family had been:

“My Young Gentlewomen like everything in the country except the Retirement, they can’t get the Plays, the Operas and the Masquerades out of their Heads, much less can they forget their Friends. However, the lightness of our Atmosphere helps them to bear all their losses with more Spirit and that they may amuse themselves the better, they are every Day up to their Elbows in Housewifery, which will qualify them effectually for useful Wives and if they live long enough, for notable women.”

A year later Colonel Byrd wrote to the Earl of Orrery:

“My Lord—I am made obliged to your Lordship for

being so very good as to sweeten my Retirement by writing so often. Whenever my spirits sink at any Time below the natural pitch Your Letters are Cordial enough to raise them again, and make me as gay as the Spring. They all bring to my Memory all the delightful scenes at Britwell and Downing Street and for Variety make me look back sometimes on the graver amusements at Will's. Mrs. Byrd too, gives you a thousand thanks for your Favours to her daughters."

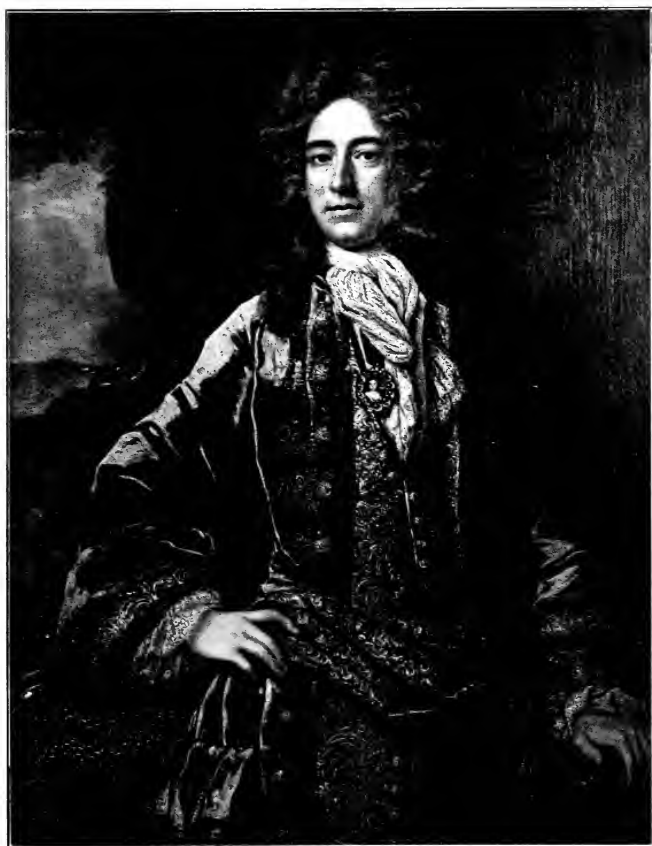
In 1760 Arthur Lee went to England to study medicine—arriving there two weeks before Christmas. On Christmas Eve he met Samuel Johnson—probably at the house of John Paradise, a friend of Doctor Johnson's who had married a Virginia woman. The Doctor graciously advised the young visitor as to the best place in which to study his profession, and writing his brother, Richard Henry Lee, of his London experiences, Arthur said:

"Last night I was in company with Dr. Johnson, author of the English Dictionary. His outward appearance is very droll and uncouth. The too arduous cultivation of his mind seems to have caused a very great neglect of his body, but for this his friends are amply rewarded in the enjoyment of a mind most elegantly polished, enlightened and refined; possessed as he is of an inexhaustible fund of remark, a Copious flow of words, expressions strong, nervous, pathetic and exalted, add to this an acquaintance with almost every subject that can be proposed; an intelligent mind cannot fail of receiving the most agreeable information and entertainment in his conversation."<sup>2</sup>

Arthur Lee met Dr. Johnson at least once more—dining with him on a famous occasion in May, 1776, when

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<sup>2</sup> Southern Literary Messenger, xxix, 62, 63.



COLONEL DANIEL PARKE



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## VIRGINIA AND ENGLAND

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Boswell, with whom Lee had formed a friendship at Edinburgh, upon which University his choice had fallen, was much exercised as to how his adored Doctor and John Wilkes would get along together.

But not all Virginians had such happy experiences in the old country. To some the temptations of the cities proved too strong, while others got into financial straits from living beyond their means, or from slow remittances from home. To these Thomas Adams, a member of a well-known family of Richmond, Virginia, who was for a time a merchant in London, seems to have been a veritable angel of mercy—his big heart and open purse making him a very ready help in time of trouble. The letter written him by Samuel Griffin, describing the delights of Bath, was followed speedily by another showing a change of mood, and appealing for aid in getting the writer out of difficulties into which gambling had involved him.

“To be ingenuous,” he wrote, “I have been imprudent enough to suffer myself to be taken in by a set of D’d knaves, however I have set a Resolution never again to play at any kind of a game but for amusement.”

In the same year George Mercer, of Stafford County, Virginia, who had been a lieutenant-colonel in the French and Indian War, and of whom a handsome portrait remains, wrote in desperation:

“My dear Adams, you must by some means or other procure me £50 by Tuesday morning, or I must go to the Dogs.” He was expecting a shipment of “a hundred puncheons of Shenandoah tobacco” from his estate in the colony with which he hoped to pay all his debts. Mr. Adams evidently helped him out, but he was soon in straits again. Nevertheless, he courted and won an English girl and when her parents very naturally opposed the

match, eloped with her. The post chaise in which the pair ran away in good old-fashioned style was overturned, but as they were not hurt the accident "occasioned more laughter than crying." At Yarmouth they stopped long enough for the hopeful bridegroom to write Mr. Adams telling him of two bills amounting to sixty pounds which would fall due in a week, and begging his friend to get him the money "by hook or by crook," to pay the interest on them, and leave it with his housekeeper, as he did not think it would "appear decent" to be arrested on his "return home with Madam for such a sum as £60."

A postscript gives a glimpse of the bride-to-be.

"I have told her," it said, "I am writing to a particular Friend. She desires for Heaven's Sake and for the sake of my own character, that I will not mention to him that I have a giddy, hot headed, runaway Young girl with me, especially if the friend has anything serious about him."

Perhaps the most adventurous career of any Virginian who travelled abroad during the Colonial period was Daniel Parke, the younger, son of the Daniel Parke, Burgess, Councillor and Secretary of State, whose mural tablet may be seen in old Bruton Church, Williamsburg. Like his father, young Parke served as a member of the House of Burgesses and of the Council, but public life in Virginia offered too narrow opportunities to satisfy so temperamental a gentleman, and after a stormy career in the colony he went to England, where he bought an estate and became a member of Parliament, but was unseated for bribing voters. In 1701 he volunteered under Lord Arran for the campaign in Flanders, and in 1704, at the battle of Blenheim, he was aide to Marlborough and so distinguished himself that he was sent with the first news



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## VIRGINIA AND ENGLAND

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of the great victory to England. He received handsome rewards, including a jewelled miniature of Queen Anne, which he ever after wore on his breast, and which appears in the two portraits of him now remaining in Virginia. Governor Nicholson, in announcing the victory to the colonists, told them with pride that the good news was brought to England by "Colonel Parke, a gentleman, and a native of this Colony."

Many Virginia wills mention English possessions or make bequests to persons in England, and many English wills name heirs in Virginia or bequeath property there. Here are a few illustrations, taken at random:

In 1640 Edward Dewall, servant of Symon Cornocke, of Warwicksqueake, Virginia, bequeathed his master an inn called "The Rose," in Reading, England. In 1645 George Scott, grocer, of London, left a brother all his lands at Martin's Hundred, Virginia. In 1648 Mrs. Susan Perrin writes her son John in Virginia:

"Yor father hath departed this life and hath left you a little house."

The fond mother also tells John that she has sent him a barrel of "things," a servant boy, and a small piece of gold for his wife, and adds, "There is a noate in ye barrel, it lyeth at ye topp in ye new blankett."

The Northampton records for 1652 contain a power of attorney from Doctor John Harmer, "Ye Greeke reader to Ye University of Oxford, heir of Charles Harmer, now or late of Jamestown in ye Dominion aforesaid."

In 1672 Thomas Gerrard, of Westmoreland County, Virginia, bequeathed land "lying in ye Kingdom of England."

In 1684 Thomas Pope, "of Bristol, Merchant," left land in Gloucester, England, and Westmoreland, Virginia.

Also in 1684 Rev. John Lawrence, of Lower Norfolk County, Virginia, a Presbyterian minister, left six tenements in the parish of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, London.

In 1695 John Newton, of Westmoreland, bequeathed lands at Carlton and Camelsforth, in Yorkshire, and a house in Hull "which was my father's."

In 1696 Charles Lightfoot, of London, left fifty pounds to his sister, Frances Lightfoot, in Virginia, "if she ever come to England and demands it, not else."

In 1708 William Brent, of Stafford County, went to England to recover the two estates of "Stoke" and "Admington" to which he had fallen heir by the dying out of the elder branch of his family.<sup>3</sup>

In 1713 Edmund Jenings resigned the office of Secretary of State of Virginia, and went to England to claim an estate which fell to him on the death of his elder brother.

In 1726 Richard Walker, of Middlesex County, Virginia, bequeathed his brothers John, Thomas, and Edward Walker, at Ashbourne, in Derbyshire, and his sister Jane Locket, in Staffordshire, twenty pounds each for "a suit of mourning."

In 1742 Leonard Yeo, of Elizabeth City County, Virginia, left his cousin George Arnold, merchant, of London, certain tenements in the borough of Hatherly "and the plate I brought from England."

In 1750 Mrs. Elizabeth Cary, of Chesterfield County, Virginia, left two hundred pounds sterling to "John Brickenhead, peruke-maker in Old Street, near St. Luke's Church, London."

In 1753 John Chichester, of Lancaster County, left his wife five hundred pounds out of his estate in England,

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<sup>3</sup> Va. Mag. of Hist. and Biog., xii, 442.



AUSTIN BROCKENBROUGH



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## VIRGINIA AND ENGLAND

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and all of his estate in England "besides," to his brother, Richard Chichester.

The intimacy between England and the Mother Country is sometimes illustrated by tombs in old English churches, like that at St. Mary's, Bedford, erected by Colonel John Page, of Williamsburg, in memory of his father, who died in 1678. Other memorials are to natives of Virginia who died in England, like the tomb of Robert Porteus, at Ripon Cathedral.

In 1703 Thomas Matthew, of "Cherry Point," Northumberland County, Virginia, directed in his will:

"If I die in or about London to be buried as near as possible to my son William, in the Church of St. Dunstan-in-the-East."

In the Church of Little Paxton, Huntingdonshire, England, is the tomb of Robert Throckmorton, Esq., who died in 1699, with an inscription which says that he was born in Virginia. In 1767 another of this family, Robert Throckmorton, of "Hail Western," Huntingdonshire, bequeathed the larger portion of his estate, valued at eight thousand pounds, to his distant kinsman, John Throckmorton, of Gloucester, Virginia, who went to England and secured it.

The Virginia colonist frequently made bequests to the poor of his birthplace or of his early and tenderly remembered home in England. In 1655 John Moon, of Isle of Wight County, left five pounds to the poor of Berry, and the same amount to the poor of Alverstock, in Hampshire, England, where he had lands, and in 1674 Captain Philip Chesley, of "Queen's Creek," York County, left to every person whose name was Chesley "inhabiting in Welford, in Gloucester"—which was probably his birthplace—"each one hogshead of tobacco."

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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In 1762 James Deans, of Chesterfield County, Virginia, bequeathed two hundred pounds to "the Infirmary" of Aberdeen, Scotland.

In view of the many close ties between Virginia and England it is surprising that so few members of prominent families of the colony took the side of the Mother Country during the Revolution. Among those who did were John Randolph—the last royal Attorney General—John Randolph Grymes, Austin Brockenbrough—who had been an officer under Washington in the French and Indian War—Richard Corbin—the last Receiver General—and Ralph Wormeley.

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## VIII

# THE THEATRE

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HEATRE-GOING is so peculiarly a diversion of city folk that it seems strange that the first play known to have been presented on an American stage was acted before an audience of farmers in a remote country neighborhood.

In far Accomac, on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, and on the 27th day of August, 1665—seventy-five years before there is any record of a dramatic entertainment in New York—"a play commonly called *ye Beare & ye Cubb*" was performed, with Cornelius Watkinson, Philip Howard, and William Darby as the principal, possibly the only, actors. Either the Puritans or the serious-minded followers of William Penn might have been expected to shake their heads over the introduction of this unseemly amusement, and even in merrier Virginia one Edward Martin felt himself in duty bound to inform the King's attorney, Mr. John Fawsett, of the matter. The three actors named were summoned to court on "ye 16th of November," and each in turn put through a rigid cross-examination and ordered to appear at the December court, "in the habiliments they had acted in, and give a draught of such verses or other speeches and passages which were then acted by them."

And so "*Ye Beare and ye Cubb*" was presented a second time in Accomac County, with "ye honorable court" and—we may depend—as many others as the room would hold, as spectators. The court finding the actors "not guilty of fault, suspended ye payment of Court

charges; & forasmuch as it appeareth upon Ye Oath of ye said Mr. Fawsett, that upon ye said Martin's information, ye Charge and trouble of that suit did accrew, It's therefore ordered that ye said Edward Martin pay all ye Charges in ye suit." <sup>1</sup>

Whether, in spite of their acquittal, the experience of these three gave play-acting in Virginia a check which was felt for nearly half a century, or performances were given of which there is no record, it is impossible to say. Dramatic entertainments would hardly have been discouraged by Sir William Berkeley, the Cavalier Governor, for he not only delighted in them when he was in London, but was himself an author of plays. It is only known that the next *mention* of a performance of a theatrical character was in 1702, when the students of William and Mary College gave "A Pastoral Colloquy" before the Governor <sup>2</sup>—whether at the college or the "palace" does not appear.

In the year 1716 residents in the colonial capital saw erected the first playhouse in Virginia and in America.

"William Levingston, merchant," had for some time conducted a dancing school in New Kent County. His star pupils, Charles Stagg and his wife, Mary, evidently developed ability to do more than dance, for under contract recorded at Yorktown, July 11, 1716, the merchant agreed with this couple, as "actors," to build a theatre in Williamsburg, and to provide players and scenery and music out of England, "for the enacting of comedies and tragedies." On November 21 he bought ground in Williamsburg, in the neighborhood of the church and the courthouse, and

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<sup>1</sup> "Early History of the Eastern Shore of Virginia," J. C. Wise, 325, 326.

<sup>2</sup> "Williamsburg," L. G. Tyler, 228.



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## THE THEATRE

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placed upon it a playhouse, a bowling-green, and a dwelling house and garden.<sup>3</sup>

Governor Spotswood, in a letter written June 24 of the next year, mentions giving a public entertainment at his house, in honor of the King's birthday, and adds "a play was acted on that occasion."<sup>4</sup> What this play was he does not say, but it must have been acted by the Staggs and others, at Levingston's theatre.

As a practical enterprise, it seems that the theatre was not successful, for in 1721 Levingston mortgaged the ground on which it stood to Dr. Archibald Blair for 500 years, and by his failure to meet his payments Dr. Blair secured possession of the property two years later.<sup>5</sup> Whether or not the performances of the company continued does not appear. Charles Stagg died in Williamsburg in 1735, and after his death Mistress Mary Stagg, the earliest leading lady of the American stage, earned her bread and butter holding "dancing assemblies" for the ladies and gentlemen of Williamsburg—charging a handsome admission fee.<sup>6</sup>

Mistress Stagg, her dwelling house and garden, and the playhouse figured interestingly in Mary Johnston's novel, "Audrey," since when the quaint cottage has been pointed out as "Audrey's house." One of its appealing features is a window-pane bearing the inscription—evidently written with a diamond—"Oh fatal day," and the date "1790."

Long before Miss Johnston's time, John Esten Cooke

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<sup>3</sup> "Williamsburg," L. G. Tyler, 224-226.

<sup>4</sup> Letters of Alexander Spotswood, ii, 284.

<sup>5</sup> "Williamsburg," L. G. Tyler, 226.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.*, 225.

found in the colonial theatre the theme for a romance entitled "The Virginia Comedians."

In 1735 and 1736 the playhouse was used to a greater or less extent by amateurs. "The Busy Body" had been a fashionable play in London since its presentation for the first time, in 1709, with Anne Oldfield as "Isabinda," the leading character, and a letter from Col. William Byrd, of "Westover," to Sir John Randolph, in Williamsburg, written January 21, 1735, bears witness that it was being acted there.<sup>7</sup>

"Which of your actors," asks the Colonel, "shown most in the play, next Isabinda, who I take it for granted is the Oldfield of the theatre?"

"How came Squire Marplot off? With many a clap, I suppose, though I fancy he would have acted more to the life in the comedy called the Sham Doctor. But not a word of this for fear in case of sickness he might poison you."

The part of "Marplot" was evidently taken by Sir John's physician, at whom Colonel Byrd takes occasion to have a playful fling.

The time-yellowed *Virginia Gazette* for September 10, 1736, contains this advertisement:

This evening will be performed at the Theatre, by the Young Gentlemen of the College, *The Tragedy of Cato*.

And on Monday, Wednesday and Friday next will be acted the following Comedies, by the Gentlemen and Ladies of this Country, viz. *The Busy Body*, *The Recruiting Officer*, and the *Beaux Stratagem*.

Under date September 17 the *Gazette* for the same year announces:

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<sup>7</sup> Va. Mag. Hist. Biog., 240, 241.

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## THE THEATRE

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“ Next Monday night will be performed the *Drummer*; or *The Haunted House*, by the Young Gentlemen of the College.”

Out of these performances and the atmosphere of merriment which they created grew one of the earliest newspaper “personals” on record. It appeared as an “advertisement” in the *Gazette* of October 22, and was evidently intended as a joke on one of the town beaux:

“ Whereas a Gentleman who towards the latter end of Summer usually wore a Blue Camlet coat lined with Red and trimmed with Silver, a silver laced hat and a Turpee wig, has often been observed by his Amoret to look very languishingly at her, the said Amoret, and particularly one night during the last session of Assembly, at the Theatre, the said gentleman ogled her in such manner as shewed him to be very far gone, the said Amoret desires the Gentleman to take the first opportunity that offers to explain himself on that subject.

“ N. B. She believes he has very pretty teeth.”

Interest in these amateur theatricals is shown by a contemporary letter. Colonel Thomas Jones, writing on September 17, 1736, to his wife in the country, sends this message to his step-daughter:

“ You may tell Betty Pratt there has been but two Plays acted since she went, which is *Cato* by the Young Gent'n of the College as they call themselves, and the *Busy body* by the Company on Wednesday Night last, and I believe there will be another to Night, they have been at a great loss for a fine Lady who I think is to be called *Dorinda*, but that difficulty is overcome by finding her, which was to be the greatest Secret and as such 'tis said to be Miss Anderson that came to Town with Mrs. Carter.”

Some time after Stagg's death the playhouse, which was not then being used, was bought by thirty-one prominent men of the colony and presented to Williamsburg as a town hall.<sup>8</sup> And thus ended the history, as a theatre, of the first theatre in America.

Six years later Williamsburg was given at once a new playhouse and an opportunity to enjoy Shakespearean drama. During the year 1750 a theatrical troupe known as the "Kean and Murray Company" was acting in New York,<sup>9</sup> and one of the rôles of Thomas Kean, its leading man, was that of Richard III. Whether or not he was of the family of that great interpreter of Shakespeare of a later day, Edmund Kean, is not known, but the connection of the name with the colonial theatre is interesting. In the *Virginia Gazette* of August 29, 1751, may be seen the following announcement:

"By permission of his Honour the President [of the Council, who was acting Governor], Whereas the Company of Comedians that are in New York intend performing in this City; but there being no Room suitable for a Play House, 'tis propos'd that a Theatre shall be built by way of Subscription; each Subscriber advancing a Pistole<sup>10</sup> to be entitled to a Box Ticket for the first Night's Diversion.

"Those Gentlemen and Ladies who are kind enough to favour this Undertaking are desired to send their Subscription Money to Mr. Finnie's, at the Raleigh, where Tickets may be had.

"N. B. The House to be completed by October Court."

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<sup>8</sup> "Williamsburg," L. G. Tyler, 226.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.*, 228.

<sup>10</sup> A Spanish coin in use in the Colony and worth about \$3.80.

By permission of the Worshipful the MAYOR of *Williamsburg*,  
 At the old Theatre, near the Capitol,  
 By the VIRGINIA COMPANY of COMEDIANS,  
 On *Friday* the 8th of *April* will be presented a TRAGEDY,  
 C A L L E D

# VENICE Preserved, OR A Plot Discovered.

DUKE,  
 PRIULI,  
 JAFFEIR,  
 PIERRE,  
 BEDAMAR,  
 RENAULT,  
 ELIOT,

} by {

Mr. CHARLTON.  
 Mr. BROMADGE.  
 Mr. GODWIN.  
 Mr. VERLING.  
 Mr. BROMADGE.  
 Mr. PARKER.  
 Mr. WALKER

BELVIDERA, by Mrs. OSBORNE.

To which will be added a ballad OPERA, called

# Damon and Phillida.

ARCAS,  
 CORYDON,  
 DAMON,  
 CYMON,  
 MOPSUS,

} by {

Mr. BROMADGE.  
 Mr. GODWIN.  
 Mrs. OSBORNE.  
 Mr. PARKER.  
 Mr. VERLING.

PHILLIDA, by Mrs. PARKER.

Tickets to be had of Mr. *William Russell*, at his store next door to the Post Office, and at the door of the Theatre.

The doors to be opened at six, and the play to begin at seven o'clock precisely.

BOXES 7 s. 6 d. PIT 5 s. GALLERY 3 s. 9 d.

*Vivant Rex & Regina.*

N. B. No person whatever can be admitted behind the scenes.

ADVERTISEMENT OF THE WILLIAMSBURG THEATRE

From the *Virginia Gazette*



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## THE THEATRE

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A site just back of the Capitol building was selected, and the promoters made good their word to have the house ready by the October Court, when doubtless the town and the visitors who thronged it at that time gave the players generous patronage. Says the *Gazette* of October 21:

“On Monday a company of Comedians opened at the New Theatre near the Capitol, in Williamsburg with King Richard III and a tragic dance composed by Monsieur Denoyer, called the Royal Captive.”

From the same paper for December 19, of the same year 1751, we learn that—

“The Company of Comedians intend to be at Petersburg by the middle of next month and hope that the Gentlemen and Ladies who are Lovers of Theatrical Entertainment will favour them with their Company.”

Later they went to Norfolk and in the spring were back in the gay little capital, as may be seen from the following advertisement from the *Gazette* of April 17, 1752:

By Permission of His Honour the Governor,  
At the New Theatre in Williamsburg,  
For the Benefit of Mrs. Beccely,  
On Friday, being the 24th of this Inst,  
Will be performed a Comedy, called the  
Constant Couple;  
or a  
Trip to the Jubilee.  
The Part of Sir Harry Wildair to be performed  
By Mr. Kean.  
Colonel Standard  
By Mr. Murray  
And the Part of Angelica to be perform'd  
By Mrs. Beccely.  
With Entertainment of Singing between the Acts.

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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Likewise a Dance, called the Drunken Peasant.  
To which will be added a Farce, called the  
Lying Valet.

Tickets to be had at Mrs. Vobe's, and at Mr. Mitchel's, in York.

They played at Hobb's Hole, as Tappahannock was then called, from May 10 to 24, and in Fredericksburg during the "June Fair," which seems to have been their last appearance in the colony. Their eight months' stay had created much gayety and doubtless given great pleasure.

But Virginians were not long to be deprived of the form of entertainment for which they had acquired so keen a relish. When they opened their *Gazettes* on June 12, 1752, their eyes were gladdened by this delightful announcement:

"This is to inform the Public that Mr. Hallam, from the New Theatre in Goodmansfield, London, is daily expected here with a select Company of Comedians; the Scenes, Cloaths, and Decorations are entirely new, extremely rich, and finished in the highest Taste, the Scenes being painted by the best Hands in London, are excell'd by none in Beauty and Elegance, so that the Ladies and Gentlemen may depend on being entertain'd in as polite a Manner as at the Theatres in London, the Company being perfect in all the best Plays, Operas, Farces and Pantomimes that have been exhibited in any of the Theatres for these ten years past."

On August 21 of the same year the *Gazette's* readers were informed that the Company lately from London had altered the Playhouse to a "regular theatre, fit for the reception of ladies and gentlemen and the execution of their own performance" and would open on the first Friday in September with "a play called the Merchant of Venice,



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## THE THEATRE

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written by Shakespeare." Ladies engaging seats in the boxes were advised to send their servants early on the day of the performance to hold them and "prevent trouble and disappointment."

On August 28 appeared the following advertisement, giving the complete cast of the play:

By Permission of the Hon. Robert Dinwiddie, Esq., His Majesty's Lieutenant Governor, and Commander in Chief of the Colony and Dominion of Virginia.

By a Company of Comedians from London,

At the Theatre in Williamsburg,

On Friday next, being the 15th of September, will be presented

A Play, Call'd,

The

Merchant of Venice,

(Written by Shakespear.)

The Part of Antonio (the Merchant) to be perform'd by

Mr. Clarkson.

Gratiano by Mr. Singleton.

Lorenzo (with songs in character) by Mr. Adcock,

The Part of Bassanio to be perform'd by

Mr. Rigby.

Duke, by Mr. Wynnell.

Salanio, by Mr. Herbert.

The Part of Launcelot by Mr. Hallam.

And the Part of Shylock (the Jew) to be perform'd by

Mr. Malone.

The Part of Nerissa, by Mrs. Adcock,

Jessica, by Mrs. Rigby.

And the Part of Portia to be perform'd by

Mrs. Hallam.

With a new occasional Prologue.

To which will be added a Farce, call'd

The Anatomist.

or,

Sham Doctor.

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COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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The Part of Monsieur le Medecin by  
Mr. Rigby,

And the Part of Beatrice, by Mrs. Adcock.

No Person whatsoever to be admitted behind the Scenes.

Boxes, 7s. 6d. Pit and Balconies, 5s. 9d. Gallery, 3s. 9d.

To begin at Six o'Clock

Vivat Rex.

The *Gazette* of September 22 reported that the drama and the farce were "performed before a numerous and polite audience, with great applause." The "new occasional prologue" had been composed on shipboard by Mr. Singleton, who played the part of "Gratiano," and was spoken by Mr. Rigby, the "Bassanio." In it, after a long preamble, the Muse is described as sending the actors to Virginia to increase her fame:

Haste to Virginia's plains, my Sons, repair,  
The Goddess said, Go, confident to find  
An Audience sensible, polite and kind.  
We heard and strait obey'd; from Britain's Shore  
These unknown Climes advent'ring to explore:  
For us then, and our Muse thus low I bend,  
Nor fear to find in each the warmest Friend;  
Each smiling Aspect dissipates our Fear,  
We ne'er can fail of kind Protection here;  
The Stage is ever Wisdom's Fav'rite Care:  
Accept our Labours then, approve our Pains,  
Your smiles will please us equal to our Gains;  
And as you all esteem the Darling Muse,  
The generous Plaudit you will not refuse.

On the ninth of November "the emperor of the Cherokee nation, with his Empress and their son, the young prince, attended by several of his warriors and great men," were received at the "palace" by his honor Governor Dinwiddie, "attended by such of the Council as were in town," and were "that evening entertained at the theatre." The play was "Othello," and it gave the Indians "great sur-

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## THE THEATRE

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prise, as did the fighting with naked swords on the stage, which occasioned the Empress to order some about her to go and prevent their killing one another.”<sup>11</sup>

On the next day Governor Dinwiddie celebrated the King's birthday with a splendid entertainment at the palace. A great company of ladies and gentlemen, the Indian guests, and the actors were all present, and Mr. Hallam was given charge of a display of fireworks in the street in front of the palace.<sup>12</sup>

The Virginians were fortunate in having so excellent a company to entertain them. Lewis Hallam and his wife were good performers, and Mrs. Hallam was, besides, a beautiful and graceful woman, while Rigby and Malone were actors of established reputation in London.<sup>13</sup> The troupe remained in Virginia, playing with “universal applause,” for nine months, and when in the summer of 1753 they left for New York, Governor Dinwiddie gave them a letter endorsing their ability as actors and their personal conduct.<sup>14</sup>

For some years after the departure of the Hallam company there is little definite information in regard to plays and players in Virginia, for there are no files of Virginia newspapers in existence between 1752 and 1766, but it is not likely that the dramatic muse suffered herself to be forgotten in the colony.

In May, 1767, Addison's “Cato” was played by the “young gentlemen of the Reverend Mr. Warrington's school, in Hampton,” and an “Epilogue” in two parts, written for the occasion, was spoken by his daughter,

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<sup>11</sup> “Williamsburg,” L. G. Tyler, 230.

<sup>12</sup> *Ib.*, 230.

<sup>13</sup> Daly's “First Theatre in America” (Dunlap Soc.), 13.

<sup>14</sup> “History of the American Theatre,” Seilhamer, 45.

Camilla Warrington. The first part refers to the play and the second to the performers, as follows:

Now for our actors—little folks we are,  
Who in a vast attempt too greatly dare:  
We strive to be in air, in gait, in looks,  
Statesmen and Princes—whom we've seen in books.  
If here we fail forgive, and be content,  
With thought and diction by the author lent.  
These are the substance and without the Show  
Aid lower life, as I already know:  
For I, in exercising smiles and frowns,  
To gain my Prince, have scarce a thought of crowns;  
But hope to make the better wife, when I  
Obtain my princely Colonel by and by.  
In one petition join our fairy band,  
Let love and patriot ardor bless the land.  
If nothing please you else, you'll clap the zeal  
Of brats who pant to serve the common weal;  
Each in th' allotted useful occupation,  
When genius, time, and fortune point the station.<sup>15</sup>

This is the first admission on record of the dream of every daughter of the Old Dominion to become the bride of a Virginia colonel "by and by."

In January, 1768, a troupe known as "The Virginia Company of Comedians" was playing in Norfolk, in a frame structure originally built for a pottery.<sup>16</sup> The *Virginia Gazette* for February 4, of that year, gives the following prologue, "Spoken by Mrs. Osborne at Norfolk, on her benefit night, Tuesday, the 19th of January:"

With doubts—joy—apprehension—almost dumb,  
Fearful—yet pleased—with *trembling* steps I come.  
No florid speech to make, but just to own,  
The Countless favors you to me have shown.

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<sup>15</sup> Gazette, May 21, 1767.

<sup>16</sup> "Lower Norfolk Co. Va. Antiquary," ii, 102.



MRS. LEWIS HALLAM, SR.  
As "Daraxa" in "Edward and Elenora"



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## THE THEATRE

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I'm told (what flattery to my heart!) that some  
For *Osborne's* sake alone this night have come;  
And yet, so poor am I, so much I owe,  
I have but thanks to give—to you—and *you*.  
In spite of better hopes, by fate decreed,  
For ten long years this motley life I've led;  
And felt (as rapidly thro' life I've whirl'd)  
All changes of this *April-weather* world!  
One day have gaily basked in sunshine warm,  
The next have shivered underneath a storm;  
Yet though thus doomed perpetually to roam,  
Still when in *NORFOLK* thought myself at home;  
And *wish'd*, yes, often *wish'd*, but oh! in vain,  
With such dear friends, I ever might remain.  
But fate decrees I no such bliss shall know,  
Still bids me wander, and resigned I go.  
For you, ye generous souls! whom here I leave,  
May every bliss be yours, this would I give!  
And should kind Heaven indulgent to my prayer,  
Once more restore me to my good friends here,  
Oh may I find you all, some few years hence,  
Still blest with *health, and peace*, and competence.

This year, 1768, was an especially brilliant one socially in the colonial capital. The Governor held stately receptions to which flocked ladies and gentlemen in court apparel; there was no end of music, dancing, and private entertaining, and there was a two months' theatrical season. The actors were "The Virginia Company of Comedians," and the old *Gazettes* give us their names, the plays they presented, and the parts they played. The performance began sometimes at six, sometimes at seven o'clock, and must have lasted to a late hour, for the audience of that day was not satisfied with one play, but expected, even at the end of a long Shakespearean tragedy, an afterpiece in the way of a farce or pantomime, or elaborate dances, and sometimes dancing and singing between the acts.

Mrs. Osborne seems to have been the bright, particular star of the company, and played both male and female rôles. Other stars were Mr. and Mrs. Parker and Mr. Godwin, who was the principal comic actor and an accomplished dancer. Mr. Parker was a singer, and others who danced as well as acted were Miss Yapp, Mr. Walker, Mr. Bromadge, and Mr. Charlton.

In the advertisements in the *Gazette* for this year the new theatre near the Capitol, built in 1751 for the "Kean and Murray Company" and improved in the year following by the Hallam troupe, has become "the old theatre." On April 14, "By permission of the Worshipful, the Mayor of Williamsburg," the "Comedians" gave "The Orphan," one of the favorite plays of the day, followed by "a new comic dance called The Bedlamites," at "the old Theatre, near the Capitol."

A slightly mutilated advertisement in the *Gazette* of May 12 announces a benefit night, probably in honor of Mrs. Osborne. Congreve's "The Constant Couple" was the principal feature of this performance, but in addition there were so many song and dance acts that the advertisement suggests a modern vaudeville:

By Permission  
Of the Worshipful the Mayor of  
Williamsburg,  
At the old Theatre, near the Capitol  
By the Virginia Company of  
Comedians,  
For the Benefit of.....  
On Wednesday .....

Will be presented  
A COMEDY CALLED  
THE CONSTANT COUPLE  
Or



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THE THEATRE

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A TRIP TO THE JUBILEE

SIR HARRY WILDAIR	MRS. OSBORNE
Colonel Standard	.....
Vizard	.....
Alderman Smuggler	.....
Beau Clincher	.....
Clincher, <i>junior</i>	.....
Dicky	Mr. Farrell
Tom Errand	Mr. Walker

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Lady Darling	Mrs. Dowthaitt
Angelica,	Miss Dowthaitt
Parley,	Miss Yapp

LADY LUREWELL, by MRS. PARKER.

Between the first and second Act a Pro  
Logue, in the Character of a COUNTRY  
Boy, by MR. PARKER.

After the Second Act, a Dance, called  
The COOPERS, by Mr. Godwin, Mess  
Bromadge, Walker, &c.

After the third Act a CANTATA, sung by  
MR. PARKER.

And in the fifth Act, a MINUET, by Miss  
Yapp, and MRS. OSBORNE, in the Character of Sir HARRY WILDAIR.  
After the PLAY, a HORNPIPE, by Mr.

GODWIN.

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To which will be added

A FARCE, called

The MILLER OF MANSFIELD.

King	Mr. Verling.
Miller	Mr. Parker.
Lord Lurwell	Mr. Godwin.
First Courtier	Mrs. Osborne
Second Courtier	Mr. Charlton
Joe	Mr. Farrell.

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COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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Madge  
Kate  
Peggy

*Mrs.* Dowthaitt  
*Miss* Dowthaitt  
*Mrs.* Parker

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Keepers, Mess. Walker, Farrell, &c.  
Tickets to be had of Mrs. OSBORNE, at  
Mrs. RATHELL'S Store, and at the Door  
of the THEATRE.

Boxes 7s. 6—Pit 5s. Gallery 3s. 9.

Vivant Rex & Regina.

To begin at 7 o'clock.

On June 3 the Company played "The Beggar's Opera" and "The Anatomist, or Sham Doctor," for the benefit of Mrs. Parker.

In the spring of 1771 the Hallams were back in Williamsburg, as members of "The American Company of Comedians," organized and managed by an actor named David Douglas. Mr. Hallam had died and Mrs. Hallam had married Douglas. During the season of 1752 in Williamsburg her son Lewis, then a boy of twelve years, had made his first appearance on any stage, but when speaking his single line had been seized with stage-fright, burst into tears, and rushed out.<sup>17</sup> Now, at the age of thirty-one, he was not only the leading man of the company, but king of the American stage, and his cousin, Sarah Hallam, the leading lady, was its queen. They had lately played to enthusiastic audiences in Annapolis, where the fine artist, Charles Wilson Peale, had painted Miss Hallam's portrait as "Imogen," in "Cymbeline," generally pronounced her best part, and the Maryland poets had celebrated her beauty and genius.<sup>18</sup> One of these sings as follows:

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<sup>17</sup> "Williamsburg," I. G. Tyler, 229.

<sup>18</sup> *Ib.*, 231.

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## THE THEATRE

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“ From earliest youth, with raptures oft  
I’ve turned great Shakespeare’s page;  
Pleased when he’s gay and soothed when soft  
Or kindled at his rage.

“ Yet not till now, till taught by thee,  
Conceived I half his power!  
I read admiring; now I see  
I only now adore.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Methinks I see his smiling shade  
And hear him thus proclaim,  
‘ In Western worlds to this fair maid  
I trust my spreading fame!  
Long have my scenes each British heart  
With warmest transports filled;  
Now equal praise, by Hallam’s art,  
America shall yield.’ ”<sup>19</sup>

On April 19, 1771, Col. Hudson Muse, of Middlesex County, wrote his brother in Maryland that he had been in Williamsburg eleven days and had “ spent the time very agreeably at the plays every night.” He pronounces Miss Hallam “ superfine,” but “ must confess her lustre was much sullied by the number of beauties that appeared at that court. The house was crowded every night and the gentlemen who have generally attended that place agree there was treble the number of fine ladies that was ever seen in town before—for my part I think it would be impossible for a man to have fixed upon a partner for life, the choice was too general to have fixed on one.”<sup>20</sup>

He adds that he hopes to make another visit to Williamsburg, “ as the players are to be there again.”

A spinet or harpsichord probably did duty as orchestra

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<sup>19</sup> “ History of the American Theatre,” Seilhamer, 290.

<sup>20</sup> William and Mary Quarterly Mag., ii, 241.

at these performances, as the music was furnished by Mr. Peter Pelham, the organist of old Bruton Church, an accomplished musician, who was—by the way—the half-brother of the famous painter, Copley.

The Diary of General Washington testifies that the theatre was a favorite diversion of that august gentleman. To find him, after busy days devoted to affairs of state, whiling away the evening hours at the play, doubtless joining heartily in the applause of the acting or in the laughter at the whimsical farces and dances, and often going with a merry party to a ball later on, is to turn the bronze statue into flesh and blood. His ledger shows many entries of expenses for “play tickets,” at Williamsburg, Alexandria, Fredericksburg, Annapolis, New York—wherever he happened to be. Indeed, so partial to playgoing was the Father of his Country that Mr. Paul Leicester Ford has written an elaborate monograph upon the subject.

Here are some fair samples of the exhibits in his Diary:<sup>21</sup>

On May 2, 1771, he “set out with Colo. Bassett for Williamsburg and reached Town about 12 O’clock—dined at Mrs. Dawson’s<sup>22</sup> & went to the Play.” On the following evening he “Dined at the Speaker’s and went to the Play—after weh Drank a Bowl or two of Punch at Mrs. Campbell’s.” On the 8th he “Dined at Southall’s with Colo. Robert Fairfax & some other Gentlemen & went to the Play &c.”

In September of the same year the players were in Annapolis, and Washington, happening to have business

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<sup>21</sup> Ford’s “Washington and the Theatre,” 19, 22.

<sup>22</sup> Mrs. Priscilla Dawson was the widow of Rev. Thomas Dawson, D.D., and a sister of Washington’s brother-in-law, Col. Burwell Bassett.



LEWIS HALLAM, JR.



A GLIMPSE INTO THE STAGGS' HOUSE



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## THE THEATRE

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there, saw them four times in six nights, on two of which he went to a ball afterward. In the following month he was in Williamsburg again, attending the session of the House of Burgesses, and thus registers his Diary:

“Oct. 29. Dined at the Speaker’s, went to the Play in the Afternoon.

31. Dined at the Governor’s, went to the Play.

Nov. 1. Dined at Mrs. Dawson’s—went to the Fireworks in the afternoon and to the Play at night.

4. Dined with the Council and went to the Play afterwards.”

In 1772, just before the “American Company of Comedians” left Virginia for their Northern tour—and for the last time—we have this from the Diary:

“Mar. 11. Dined at the Club and went to the Play.

17. Dined at the Club and went to the Play in the afternoon.

19. Dined at Mrs. Dawson’s & went to the Play in the evening.

25. Dined at Mrs. Lewis Burwell’s and went to the Play.

Apr. 3. Dined at Mrs. Campbell’s and went to the Play—Then to Mrs. Campbell’s again.

7. Dined at Mrs. Campbell’s and went to the Play.”

Among dramas not already mentioned witnessed by the gentlemen quoted and their friends in the autumn of 1771 were “West Indian,” “Musical Lady,” “King Lear”—announced as never before performed in Virginia—“Every Man in his Humor,” “Damon and Phillida,” “Jealous Wife,” and “Padlock.”

It seems from one of Washington’s letters to Mrs.

George William Fairfax that he occasionally took part in amateur theatricals. He writes:

“I should think our time more agreeably spent, believe me, in playing a part in *Cato*, with the company you mention and myself doubly happy in being the *Juba* to such a *Marcia* as you must make.”

In the spring of 1772 the “Comedians” were in Williamsburg again, and the *Gazette* of April 2 gives them editorial comment:

“Mr. Kelley’s new comedy of *A Word to the Wise* was performed at our Theatre last Thursday for the first time, and repeated on Tuesday to a very crowded and splendid audience. It was received both nights with the warmest marks of approbation; the *sentiments* with which this excellent piece is replete were greatly and deservedly applauded, and the audience, while they did justice to the merit of the Author, did no less honor to their own refined taste. If the comic writers would pursue Mr. Kelley’s plan, and present us only with moral plays, the stage would become (what it ought to be) a school of politeness and virtue. Truth indeed, obliges us to confess that for several years past most of the new plays that have come under our observation have had a moral tendency, but there is not enough of them to supply the theatre with a variety of exhibitions sufficient to engage the attention of the public; and the most desirable enjoyments, by too frequent a repetition, become insipid.”

In the *Gazette* of April 9 appears this advertisement:

ON TUESDAY next, being the 14th Instant  
A NEW COMEDY, CALLED  
FALSE DELICACY  
By the Author of A WORD TO THE WISE.



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## THE THEATRE

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*It may not be improper to give notice that the Theatre in Williamsburg will be closed at the end of the April Court, the American Company's Engagements calling them to the Northward from whence it is probable they will not return for several years.*

On April 21 they played "The Provoked Husband," followed by "the Farce of Thomas and Sally," and this seems to have been their farewell performance. Just once more they appear in the columns of the *Virginia Gazette* whose New York correspondent, on October 14, 1773, gave Mrs. Douglas the doubtful pleasure of reading her own obituary.

"Last week," reads this notice, "died at Philadelphia, Mrs. Douglas, wife of Mr. Douglas, Manager of the American Company of Comedians, and mother of Mr. Lewis Hallam: a Lady who by her excellent performances upon the stage, and her irreproachable manners in private life, had recommended herself to the friendship and affection of many of the principal families on the Continent and in the West Indies."

In a "Supplement" bearing the same date, the newspaper declares that the announcement of the death of Mrs. Douglas was a mistake, "For by late advices from Annapolis, in Maryland, where the American Company of Comedians is now performing that lady was in very good health and acting on the stage with her usual applause."

And now ends the story of the theatre in Colonial Virginia.

Already a wider stage was being set for the more thrilling scenes of the American Revolution, and with the rising of the curtain upon that great drama of real life the toy playhouses in Virginia and the other colonies closed

their doors. In 1774 the Congress which met in Philadelphia to discuss resistance to Great Britain resolved and recommended to the people "to discountenance and discourage every species of extravagance and dissipation, especially all horse-racing, all kinds of gaming, cock-fighting, exhibitions of shews, plays and other expensive diversions and entertainments."

And Sarah Hallam, the lovely and gifted, what became of her when young, and at the height of her fame this embargo was laid upon her art?

It is evident that she had made a place for herself as a woman as well as an actress in the hearts of her patrons in the Virginia capital, for, laying aside the rôles in which she had appeared so charmingly before them, she returned to them in the character of herself and made her home among them, earning her living conducting a fashionable boarding school for girls.<sup>23</sup> In an advertisement in the *Gazette* of August 18, 1775, she "begs leave to acquaint the ladies and gentlemen" of Williamsburg that she "hopes to be favoured with the instruction of their daughters" in the "genteel accomplishment of dancing," which was evidently considered an important part of a young person's education in Virginia, even with war-clouds muttering.

With this advertisement the star makes her exit from colonial records, but the personal charm to which she held fast, even in old age, is among the traditions of Williamsburg. Mrs. Randolph Harrison, a venerable lady of that storied town, who when a small child visited Miss Hallam in the modest cottage in which she was living at a great age, and the pet of the place, as late as 1839, has given us an appealing picture of her.

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<sup>23</sup> William and Mary Quarterly, xii, 237.

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## THE THEATRE

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“Though possessing no visible means of support,” says Mrs. Harrison, the actress “fared sumptuously every day.” A wealthy planter provided her with servants, and the people of Williamsburg “vied with each other in supplying her with comforts and luxuries.”

The ladies of old Bruton Church “held weekly prayer meetings in her chamber where she sat enthroned in her old arm chair.” Happy were the children who were allowed to attend these services—not that they developed unusual evidences of early piety, but “visions of sugar plums danced through their heads.” Not only were they “feasted with dainties on their arrival, but on leaving each child was presented with a paper bag of good things to take home.” It seemed to the fortunate little visitors that Miss Hallam’s sole occupation was making these bags, for the pockets around her chair were kept filled with them.

“When this dear old lady was gathered to her fathers,” adds Mrs. Harrison, “there was universal mourning in the community.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Letter quoted in William and Mary Quarterly, xvii, 66, 67.

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IX  
OUTDOOR SPORTS

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HE emigrants to Virginia brought with them the Englishman's love of outdoor life. Horses were introduced early and increased rapidly, and the planters became unsurpassed riders. This perhaps accounts for the charm they found in racing, which they regarded as peculiarly a gentleman's diversion and which became the reigning and raging sport of the colony.<sup>1</sup>

Disputes over races settled in court and preserved in the county records provide our earliest information on the subject. For instance, in 1674 York County Court issued this order:

"James Bullock, a Taylor having made a race for his mare to run w'th a horse belonging to Mr. Mathew Slader for twoe thousand pounds of tobacco and caske, it being contrary to Law for a Labourer to make a race, being a sport only for Gentlemen, is fined for the same one hundred pounds of tobacco and caske.

"Whereas Mr. Mathew Slader & James Bullock, by condition under the hand and Seale of the said Slader that his horse should runn out of the way that Bullock's mare might win, w'ch is an apparent cheate, is ord'ed to be putt in the stocks & there sitt the space of one houre."

From which it seems that though the tailor was punished for aspiring to indulge in the gentleman's sport, being a gentleman did not save his adversary from the humiliation

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<sup>1</sup> For a comprehensive article on Racing in the Colony see the Va. Magazine of History and Biography, ii, 293.



JOHN BAYLOR, OF "NEW MARKET"

Noted turfman. When at Putney Grammar School, England, about 1721



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of the stocks when it was discovered that he won the stake by cheating.

The earliest mention of a race in the records of Henrico County, which are the most accessible to me, is the following, in 1678:

“ Bartholomew Roberts, aged 40 years or thereabouts, Deposeth that July last yo'r Deponent being at Bermuda Hundred, there being a horse race run between Mr. Abraham Womock & Mr. Rich'd Ligon. Capt. Tho. Chamberlaine being at ye end of ye race, he asked whether both horses were ready to run, young Tho. saying yes, and Abraham Childers being ordered to start the horses he bid them go. Tho: Cocke's went about 4 or 5 lengths from ye starting place, run out of ye way, and Tho: Cocke rained him in and cryed it was not a faire start & Capt. Chamberlaine calling ye other man backe, Joseph Tanner made answer, ye start is faire, onely one horse run out of ye way.”

Henrico people seem to have been quarrelsome over their races. Among others which they brought into court was one in 1679 between Richard Ligon and Alexander Womock, for three hundred pounds of tobacco; one in 1683 between Edward Hatcher and Andrew Martin—the winner to have the other's horse; one in 1687 between Mr. John Brodnax and Captain William Soane, and a number in later years.

Among the places where the races were run were “Varina,” “Malvern Hill,” and “the race-place commonly called ye Ware.” The usual distance for these early races seems to have been a quarter of a mile, and they were run by saddle horses; there is no evidence that horses were kept especially for racing until some time in the eighteenth century—probably about 1730.

The passion for racing increased as time went on. Writing in 1724, Hugh Jones says:

“The common planters leading easy lives don’t much admire Labour or many Exercises except horse racing.”

The *Virginia Gazette* of January 11, 1739, contains an advertisement of races—some at four miles—at Mr. Joseph Sewell’s, in Gloucester, for various purses, running as high as thirty pistoles. The managers were William Nelson, of York, and Ralph Wormeley, of Middlesex—two of the most prominent gentlemen in the colony. The Reverend Andrew Burnaby, who was in Virginia in 1759, commented on the horses thus:

“The Gentlemen of Virginia who are exceedingly fond of horse racing, have spared no expense or trouble to improve the breed of them by importing great numbers from England.”

Between 1740 and 1775 the names of at least fifty horses and thirty mares, imported to Virginia, are recorded, and there were probably many others. Among the gentlemen who by these importations laid the foundation of the Virginia race of thoroughbred horses, or who were otherwise interested in such horses and the turf, were William Smalley, Mr. Maclin, Capt. William Evans, James Gibson, William Lightfoot of “Sandy Point,” Col. John Tayloe of “Mt. Airy,” Alexander Spotswood (later the Revolutionary General), Col. John Baylor of “New Market,” Col. John Syme of Hanover, Nathaniel Harrison of “Brandon,” Sir Marmaduke Beckwith of Richmond County, Col. Francis Thornton of “Society Hill,” King George County, Col. William Byrd of “Westover,” Mordecai Booth of Gloucester County, Daniel McCarty of “Pope’s Creek,” William Fitzhugh of “Chatham,” Wil-



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liam Brent of "Richland," Lewis Burwell of "Carter's Creek," Ralph Wormeley of "Rosegil," Richard Lee, James Balfour of Brunswick County, Capt. Littleburry Hardyman of "Indian Fields," Charles City, Armistead Lightfoot, Roger Gregory, William Churchill of "Wilton," Edward Ambler of Jamestown, Col. Thomas Mann Randolph of "Tuckahoe," Col. John Willis of Brunswick, Capt. Henry Harrison of Sussex County, Thomson Mason, John Fleming of Cumberland County, Nathaniel Walthoe, Samuel Du Val, Col. John Mercer of "Marlborough," Francis Whiting, George Nicholas, Philip Lightfoot Lee of "Stratford," George Baylor, Landon Carter, John Banister of "Battersea," Mann Page of "Rosewell," Moore Fauntleroy, Maximilian Robinson of Richmond County, William Hardyman, James Parke Farley, Robert Goode of "Whitby," Benjamin Grymes, Walker Taliaferro, Robert Slaughter, Col. Presley Thornton of "Northumberland House," and his son Peter Presley Thornton, Peter Conway of Lancaster County, John Baird of "Hallsfield," Prince George County, Thomas Minor of Spotsylvania, George B. Poindexter of New Kent County, William O. Winston of Hanover, and finally, the versatile George Washington, who, according to the "Turf Register," was a steward of the Alexandria Jockey Club and ran his own horses there and at Annapolis.

There are few files of the *Virginia Gazette* between 1740 and 1756, but those that remain, and the *Maryland Gazette*, show that the sport was as much in vogue as ever during these years. One of the most exciting races of this period was in 1752 when William Byrd, the third, issued a challenge to run his horse Tryall against any for five hundred pistoles—about eighteen hundred dollars.

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COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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Five horses were entered and the race was run at "Gloucester race ground," and won by Selima, belonging to Colonel Tasker of Maryland.

Racing news occupied a prominent place in the *Virginia Gazette* from 1766 to 1775. One of the chief turf events seems to have been the four-mile heat race for one hundred pounds, run at Williamsburg each spring and fall. In April, 1766, this was won by Colonel John Tayloe's Traveler, and in October by the same gentleman's Hero. In the spring of 1768 it was won by Captain Littleberry Hardyman's Partner, and in the fall by Colonel Lewis Burwell's Remus. J. F. D. Smith, an English traveller who was in Virginia in 1772, and wrote his impressions, mentioned the Williamsburg spring and fall races when two, three and four-mile heats were run over an excellent course adjoining the town, and said that annual races were established in almost every considerable place in Virginia.

Racing in the colony closed with a most successful season in 1774. The Fredericksburg Jockey Club had an especially brilliant meeting, when the "Jockey Club Plate," the "Town Purse," and other races were hotly contested by horses belonging to the foremost gentlemen of the country.

What was perhaps the last great race before the Revolution—the "Town & Country Purse," four mile heats—was reported in quite modern style as follows:

William Fitzhugh, of Chatham's, ch. g. Volun-				
teer, 140 lbs. . . . .	4	4	1	1
Peter Conway, Esq.'s, gr. m. Mary Gray, 122 lbs.	1	3	dis.	
Alex. Spotswood, Esq.'s, ch. g. Sterling, 122 lbs.	3	1	2	2
Thos. Minor, Esq.'s, s-h. Fearnaught, 140 lbs. . .	2	2	2	dis.
Robt. Slaughter, Esq.'s, bl. h. Ariel, 132 lbs. . . . .				dis.

A complete search of the newspapers, letters, and

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## OUTDOOR SPORTS

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records of the time would be necessary for full illustration of the almost universal interest in horses and racing. Leading men, even when not owning race horses, went regularly to race meetings. For instance there is a letter to Washington from George Mason dated "Race Ground at Bog-gess's Saturday 6th May, 1758, 5 o'clock P.M."

Naturally the passion for racing was injurious to those who indulged in reckless betting, and this was felt by some of the planters. Robert Page, of "Broad Neck," Han-over County, in his will made in 1765, directed that neither of his sons should be allowed to go to horse races.

From an early time the Virginians had field days given up to all sorts of outdoor sports and exercises, and in 1691 Governor Sir Francis Nicholson appointed a regular day for such recreations and offered prizes for those who should excel in them, by proclamations published in the counties, of which this is a sample:

"To the Sheriff of Surry County,

"I desire that you give public notice that I will give first and second prizes to be shott for, wrasttled, played at backswords, & run for by Horse and foott, to begin on the 22d day of Aprill next, St. George's day, being Saturday, all which prizes are to be shott for &c by the better sort of Virginians onely, who are Batchelors."

The Governor duly received a letter from "The Batchelors of Virginia," thanking him for his intention of "instituting annual games for the training of young men in manly exercises and feats of activity."

The *Virginia Gazette* tells how Mr. Augustus Graham, "a generous bachelor" of Scotch birth, living in Hanover County, "provided a handsome entertainment for gentlemen and ladies on November 30, 1736—St. Andrew's

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## COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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day—and for their diversion gave several prizes to be contended for by several sorts of exercise and agility, all at his own expense.” He was “honored with a great deal of Company who were so well pleased that it was then resolved for keeping the same spirit of friendship and good society to have an annual meeting” to be paid for by subscription. And here is the programme, given in the *Gazette*, for the “meeting” on St. Andrew’s Day of the following year.

Twenty horses were to be run around a three-mile course for a prize of five pounds. A hat worth twenty shillings was to be “cudgelled for.” A violin was to be played by twenty fiddlers and given to him that should be adjudged to play the best; no person to play unless he brought a fiddle with him. After this prize was won all the fiddlers were to play together, each a different tune, and be treated by the company.

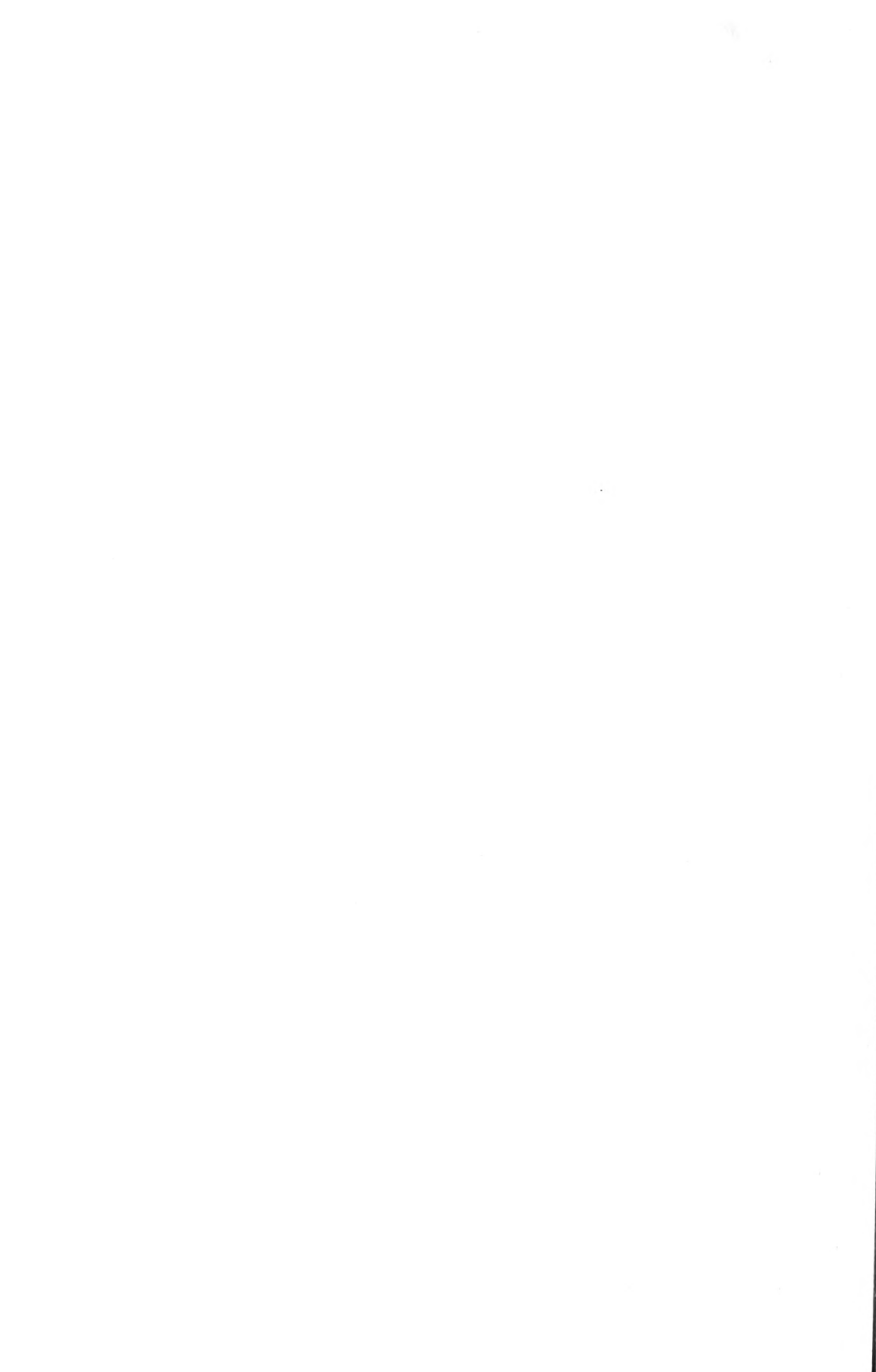
Twelve boys twelve years of age were to run twelve yards for a hat worth twelve shillings. A “Quire of Ballads” was to be sung for by a number of songsters, the best songster to have the prize and all to have liquor to clear their windpipes. A pair of silver buckles was to be wrestled for by a certain number of brisk young men, a pair of handsome shoes to be danced for and a pair of silk stockings to be given to the handsomest young country maid that appeared in the field, and there were to be “many other whimsical and comical diversions too tedious to mention.” A flag was to fly thirty feet high, and drums, trumpets, and hautboys were to play. A handsome entertainment was promised the subscribers and their wives, and such of them as were not so happy as to have wives would be permitted to treat any other lady. After dinner “the



AN OLD VIRGINIA RACE HORSE



LORD FAIRFAX'S RIDING BOOTS



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Royal healths, his Honor, the Governor's, &c.," were to be drunk.

Finally the advertisement announced, "as this mirth is designed to be purely innocent and void of offence, all persons resorting there are desired to behave themselves with decency and sobriety. All immorality is to be discountenanced with the utmost rigour."

Beverley, writing of the pastimes of the Virginians at the beginning of the eighteenth century, says:

"They have hunting, fishing and fowling, with which they entertain themselves in an hundred ways." He describes the hunting of wild horses, of deer, and other game, including the "treeing," after dark, of opossums, of which he says:

"In this sort of hunting they carry their great dogs with them, because wolves, bears, panthers, wild cats and other beasts of prey are abroad in the night."

The fox chase, with hounds—so dear to the Englishman's heart—was a favorite sport of the Virginians, and the letters of the period contain many allusions to it. In 1756 William Stevens, of Hanover County, wrote to Nathaniel Phillips, in London:

"This morning I went a fox hunting with some gentlemen where we had an excellent sport, for after running him four hours we killed him."

Washington was an enthusiastic fox hunter, as frequent entries in his diary attest. In a letter to him from Bryan Fairfax, in 1768, the writer says:

"I shall be glad of your Company at Towlston when it is convenient to spend three or four days or more. I can't say my hounds are good enough to justify an Invitation to Hunt."

When Lord Fairfax was living at "Belvoir," a member of his household sent the following note to a neighbor:

"Dear Sir:

"His Lordship proposes drawing Mudd Hole tomorrow; first killing a Fox; then to turn down a Bagged Fox before your door for ye diversion of ye Ladies; but I would not have you think that we shall stop a long time at y'r door, for if y'r dinner should be ready by two then we shall pass through y'r door and enter y'r House. . . .

"If you should chuse Friday for our coming lett me know. We took the Fox yesterday without Hurt."

A sport popular with men of all ranks from the master to the slave was that of cock-fighting, and again we find Washington stepping from the pedestal which evidently often cramped his legs, to enjoy himself like any gentleman of the day with perfectly good flesh and blood. Writing in his journal in 1752 he says:

"A Great Main of cocks was fought in Yorktown between Gloucester and York for 5 pistoles each battle, and 100 ye odd. I left with Colo. Lewis before it was decided."

Says the *Virginia Gazette* of May 23, 1755:

"On Tuesday, 6th of this inst., was determined at the New Kent Court House, the great Cock Match between Gloucester and New Kent, for 10 pistoles a battle and 100 the main. There fell eighteen of the Match of which the New Kent men won ten and Gloucester seven, and one drawn battle. Some James River cocks that fell on the New Kent side distinguished themselves in a very extraordinary manner."

The advertisement of a cock fight at Sussex Court House, in 1768, ends, "At night there will be a ball for the ladies and gentlemen."



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Boat racing was another popular diversion. Philip Fithian gives a lively account of one which he attended at Hobb's Hole—now Tappahannock—on the Rappahannock River. He was one of a company of forty-five ladies and sixty gentlemen who watched the race from the deck of the ship *Beaufort* and were given "an elegant entertainment" by her Master, Captain Dobby. There was a ball that night, at the house of Mr. Ritchie, a wealthy merchant of the town—two fiddlers furnishing music for the minuet and other dances. Says our faithful chronicler:

"Dolly Edmundson, a short, pretty, stump of a girl, danced well, sung a song with great applause and seemed to enter into the spirit of the entertainment. Mr. Ritchie's Clerk, a limber, well-dressed, pretty handsome chap seemed fond of her and she of him . . . and waited on her home, in close hugg too, the moment he left the ballroom."

The company "got to bed by three, after a day spent in constant, violent exercise and drinking an unusual quantity of liquor."

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## X

# EDUCATION

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### I—FREE SCHOOLS



HE group of Virginians, who as the colonial period drew to a close stood ready to bear a tremendous part in securing freedom and constructing a nation in America, is the best evidence of the moral and intellectual training which had been going quietly on in his Majesty's first colony.

It is not necessary to name these men—their fame has gone round the world and grows brighter with the passing of the years. In them the seeds of Anglo-Saxon civilization which their forefathers had brought across the sea to plant and nurture in a new world flowered splendidly.

It is natural to ask what sort of educational system produced these soldiers, orators, and statesmen, for highly developed genius such as theirs could never have sprung from the uncultivated and unfertilized soil of illiteracy.

The destruction of Virginia records which began with the burning of Jamestown, in 1676, makes it difficult to report with any degree of completeness on educational advantages in Virginia—especially in the earliest years—as on other matters, but enough remains to indicate earnest zeal for the training of youth, and every opportunity the time and conditions made possible. A goodly number of the emigrants had been liberally educated in the schools and universities of England and Scotland, and these of course saw to it that their children did not grow up in ignorance. There was time to spare on the plantations, and many a child was carefully taught by parents and

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## EDUCATION

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guardians. Almost all homes but the poorest contained books, few or many—historical, religious, scientific, and literary works—and as there was practically no light literature, young people and their elders did more reading of a kind to give them mental exercise, and persons of every age, class, and condition drank far more deeply than now of that well of English pure and undefiled—the Bible.

In addition to these cultivating influences, the planter's child learned the three Rs or received a liberal education in one or more of four ways: From a tutor under the parental roof, from a local school—free or private—to and from which he went each day, or in which he boarded, from a school or college abroad, or—after 1693—from William and Mary College.

Toward the end of the period a few Virginia boys were sent to Princeton and other Northern colleges.

Masters were made to see that orphaned and other children apprenticed to them were taught to read and write, and provision was made by both Church and State and in wills of charitably disposed men and women that poor children should attend the "old field" and other schools free of charge.

This does not mean that everybody was educated in even the most rudimentary way. It must be remembered that universal education was then a thing undreamed of; that in England, illiteracy among the poorer classes was widespread, and that old letters bear witness that many ladies of rank there could not spell. One fair test of literacy is the number of persons in a community who can sign their names. Philip A. Bruce has shown that in Virginia in the seventeenth century over fifty per cent. of persons on juries, sixty per cent. of men making deeds

and depositions, and thirty-three per cent. of women could write.<sup>1</sup> There was vast improvement as time went on. Signatures in the printed volume of Spotsylvania County records prove that from 1729 to 1734 about twenty-three per cent. of persons represented were illiterate. In the ten years following only fourteen per cent. could not write. This may be too high a proportion of literacy to be exact, as many of the deeds were made by large landholders, who were generally men of education. Yet out of signers of a hundred and fifty-five deeds, not especially selected, in the same county, only twelve made their marks. Alexander Brown, referring to the period from 1740 to 1770, says:

“I have orders for entry or transfer of lands from nearly a thousand different persons, and it was rare indeed that they were not able to write their own orders. It is true that some of the writing is very bad, but much of it is very good.”<sup>2</sup>

There were no children in the colony during its earliest years, but soon after the first birth, in 1609, ships with new supplies of emigrants brought children, as well as men and women.

Indian children were there from the beginning, however, and very early the Virginia Company of London launched a plan to found a college in which to educate and make Christians of them, and at the same time give the planters educational advantages for their children. In 1617 King James ordered letters patent to be issued throughout his kingdom to raise money, and a handsome sum was contributed and invested for the proposed institution. The Virginia Assembly of 1619 discussed plans

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<sup>1</sup> Bruce's "Institutional History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century," i, 450, 459.

<sup>2</sup> Brown's "Cabells and their Kin," 190, 191.



WILLIAM AND MARY COLLEGE  
The second building, 1724-1859



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## EDUCATION

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for it, the Virginia Company gave it a fertile tract of ten thousand acres at Henrico, on James River, and by 1620 "the College lands" had been laid off into small farms and a hundred tenants sent out from England to cultivate them on shares—the rewards of their labor to be equally divided between the College and themselves. In this year came Master George Thorpe, a gentleman of his Majesty's privy chamber, distinguished for godliness and learning, who had been appointed manager of the College and assigned three hundred acres of land with ten tenants to cultivate it.

Not only in Virginia and in England were plans for education in the colony going forward. At the faraway Cape of Good Hope the British ship *Royal James*, returning home from India, met some vessels which had been to Virginia and gave so favorable a report of the colony that the Reverend Mr. Copeland, the good ship's chaplain, passed around his hat among the passengers and mariners and collected over seventy pounds sterling to be devoted to building either a church or a school there. In 1621 this gift, equal to at least seventeen hundred dollars to-day, was turned over to the Virginia Company which appointed a committee to consider what to do with it. The committee decided that "as each plantation would have a church" there was "greater want of a school," which would be "like to prove a worke most acceptable unto the planters . . . constrained at great cost to send their children home (to England) to be taught."

The Company agreed to use the money "towards the erection of a publique free schoole in Virginia," for which they had already received an anonymous gift of forty pounds sterling. They named it the East India School, appointed Mr. Copeland as its rector, and gave it a thou-

sand acres of land in Charles City, a few miles from the site chosen for the College to which it was to be a sort of annex, and to which students from the school were to be advanced into such scholarships and fellowships as should be endowed. An architect and carpenter bringing his wife and five apprentices came over early in 1622 to build the school-house, but in March of that year plans for both school and college were completely overthrown by the ghastly Indian Massacre which came very near annihilating the colony itself. Good Master Thorpe was one of the hapless victims.

A year later the Virginia Company, evidently not realizing in far-away London the stricken state of the colony, gave orders for the improvement of the College lands and the construction of the College building, declaring, "The work by the assistance of God shall again proceed." But at the close of another year the revocation of the Company's charter put an end at once to its useful existence and its plans for a school and a college on the James.

For some years no known attempts for providing educational advantages in the colony were made, but on February 12, 1642-43, Benjamin Syms bequeathed two hundred acres of his land and eight cows to found a free school in Elizabeth City County. The profits from the sale of the milk and of the first increase of the cattle were to be used to build a schoolhouse and later profits to carry on the school. The Assembly declared that the gift should be used "according to the godly intent of the testator," and the school was successfully established by this first gift for education in America by a resident in any American colony. The good work evidently prospered, for a writer describing conditions in Virginia in 1647 says:

"We have a free school with two hundred acres of land, a fine house upon it, forty milch kine and other



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accommodations. The benefactor deserveth perpetual mention, Mr. Benjamin Syms, worthy to be chronicled. Other petty schools we have."

Elizabeth City was fortunate, for on September 20, 1659, another of its planters, Thomas Eaton, bequeathed a farm of five hundred acres with everything on it, including houses and furniture, orchards, two negroes, fourteen cattle, and twenty hogs, for a second free school for children born within the limits of the county.

It is evident that only children of the poor were supposed to attend these and other "free" schools of Virginia, without charge, but it was said in 1759 that a great number of students whose parents were able to pay for their education had been admitted gratis to the Eaton School. There is much testimony to the benefits of both the Syms and Eaton schools. They existed separately until 1805, when they were combined under the name of Hampton Academy and to-day survive in the Syms-Eaton Academy which, with a handsome building and a little fund of its own, is part of the public school system of the town of Hampton.

From the middle of the seventeenth century on, many wills, some of them of men and women of obscure position and small estate, show bequests for founding schools or aiding children of the poor in obtaining an education. When in 1671 Governor Berkeley declared that he thanked God there were no free schools in the colony, he gave enemies of Virginia a weapon with which they have been hacking away at her fair name ever since. What the embittered old man meant will never be known. He certainly was well aware of the Syms, Eaton, and other schools that were by that time scattered about, but perhaps he deemed them as nothing compared with the great schools of old

England. He was himself a scholar and an author, but he was also an extremely narrow aristocrat, wrapped up in a pride and caste feeling that made him spurn the common people who he would probably have said had no more right to learn to read than to wear gold lace. Robert Beverley, the Virginia historian, wrote in 1705:

“There are large tracts of land, houses and other things granted to free schools for the education of children in many parts of the country, and some of these are so large that of themselves they are a handsome maintenance to a master; but the additional allowance which gentlemen give their sons render them a comfortable subsistence. These schools have been founded by the legacies of well-inclined gentlemen, and the management of them hath commonly been left to the direction of the county court or the vestry of their respective parishes.”

Among the “well-inclined gentlemen” and women of Virginia in the seventeenth century who are known to have interested themselves in public education were “Mr. Lee,” of Northumberland, whose plan for establishing a free school there was approved by the county court in 1652; Captain William Whittington, who in 1654 bequeathed two thousand pounds of tobacco for use of a free school under contemplation in Northampton County; John Moon, who in 1655 left a legacy of cattle, and Henry King, who in 1668 left a hundred acres of land for maintenance of schools in Isle of Wight County; Richard Russell, a Quaker, of Lower Norfolk, who about 1670 left part of his estate for the education of children of the poor in his neighborhood; Henry Peasley, who in 1675 bequeathed six hundred acres of land, ten cows and a mare for founding a free school in Gloucester County; Mrs. Frances Pritchard, wife of Richard Pritchard, a boatwright, who

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in 1680 left a legacy to found a free school in Lancaster County; and William Gordon, who in 1685 gave Christ Church Parish, Middlesex, a hundred acres of land on which to build a free school.

This parish had at least two legacies for free schools in the next century. In 1763 James Reed left it two lots in the town of Urbanna and in 1768 Alexander Frasier left it land in Middlesex County.

In 1704 William Rawlings, of King William County, bequeathed his estate "for schooling of poor children."

About 1706 Mrs. Mary Whaley, of York County, founded a free school in Williamsburg in honor of her only child Matthew, or "Mattey." In her will in 1742 she gave the "Mattey School," with over five hundred pounds sterling for its maintenance, to Bruton Parish, and it did a beneficent work in the colonial capital for many years.

In 1711 William Stark gave a quarter of an acre lot in Yorktown "for the proper yuse of a schoule forever and for no other yuse but for a public scoule to educate children." In the deed he gives a list of gentlemen who had been "benefactors" of the school. They were Will Hewit, Thomas Hansford, Thomas and Will Barber, Joseph Walker, Lewis Burwell, Cole Digges, William and Thomas Harwood, Robert Goodwin, Cuthbert Hubert, Thomas Wade, Robert Crawley, Will Babb, Richard Pate, Richard Butt and William Stark.

In 1723 John Mayo, of Middlesex, bequeathed property for the education of children of the poor.

In 1753 Mrs. Elizabeth Smith, of Isle of Wight, "did by deed order" her trustee, Joseph Bridger, to invest part of her estate in a lot in Smithfield and build upon it a house for a free school. She also appointed three trustees to employ a teacher and look after the school, and in her

will she left it a handsome sum of money—referring to it as “my school.”

In 1766 Joseph Royle, of Williamsburg, directed in his will that in event of the death of his son his estate was to be used to found “Royle’s Free School,” for which he wished employed a teacher “of good character and capable of teaching the English language with propriety, accent, cadence and emphasis; civility, arithmetic and practical Mathematics.” This was one of a number of wills—early and late—directing that property be devoted to educational purposes upon the death of childless heirs.

In 1770 Colonel Landon Carter, of Richmond County, mentions his “Charity school” in his diary, and in 1772 he writes, “Gave William Rigmaden £20, being his salary, this day at my free school.” Colonel Carter had a private tutor for his own children.

In 1774 William Robinson left his estate for the education of the poor of Halifax County, and Colonel Humphrey Hill bequeathed five hundred pounds to St. Stephen’s Parish, King and Queen County, to be put out at interest for the education of poor children.



WILLIAM BYRD, OF "WESTOVER"



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### II—PRIVATE SCHOOLS

In addition to the free schools there were little private schools scattered through the colony, both in eastern Virginia and in the mountains. Many of them were taught by parish ministers who were frequently college-bred Englishmen or Scotchmen who thus placed their accomplishments at the service of their flocks and at the same time added comfortably to their own incomes. Others had schoolmasters who came over with credentials from the Bishop of London or were duly examined and licensed by his Majesty's Council in Virginia. In the latter part of the seventeenth century there were a number of these little schools in Henrico, then a frontier county in constant danger from the Indians—among them a boarding school kept by a gentleman with the delightful name of Havaliah Horner. The little Bland boys, Theodorick and Richard, were there about 1673, evidently at a tender age, as their mother sent a cow to the school to furnish them with milk.

In 1683 Nathaniel Hill, a Gloucester County schoolmaster, moved to Henrico and the county court ordered that he be exempt from taxes for a year as an encouragement to "able tutors" to settle in those parts. In 1688 Thomas Dawley, of Henrico, charged a patron thirty shillings for teaching two children nine months. As to whether or not they were young enough to have their cow go to school with them the deponent fails to enlighten us. In 1699 the Council recommended Thomas Kingston, Thomas Smythe, and Nicholas Sharpe to the Henrico authorities as suitable persons for schoolmasters.

In 1687 Colonel William Fitzhugh, of Stafford County, wrote a friend in London that he found it difficult to educate his children in that remote neighborhood, "and better never be born than be ill-bred." Three years later

he wrote that he had intended sending his eldest son to England to school, but meeting a French clergyman of learning, in whose family only French was spoken, he put the boy with him and he was getting on well in both French and Latin.

While some of these country pedagogues were classical scholars, others, of course, attempted only the rudiments. In 1684 Valentine Evans, of York County, taught reading and writing for twenty shillings a year. In 1699 Stephen Lylly and Charles Goring, of Elizabeth City County, "being found capable of teaching youth reading, writing and arithmetick," were recommended to the Governor for licenses as schoolmasters.

In 1712 Samuel Shepperd, of Princess Anne County, was granted leave to build a school "on ye court house land for common benefit." He is given "liberty to keep School in ye Courthouse till a School house be Built." In 1716 George Shurly, also of Princess Anne, obtained permission for his servant, Peter Taylor, to keep school in the courthouse and jury room, "Ye Court thinking ye same to be a reasonable and usual practise."

From 1736 until 1739, inclusive, George Mason, the author-to-be of the Bill of Rights, went to a Prince William County boarding school, paying a thousand pounds of tobacco a year for board and eight hundred and forty-five pounds for schooling and books. His sister Mary went for three years, paying the same amount for board but only two hundred pounds of tobacco a year for schooling. Neither in England nor in Virginia at the time were girls supposed to need much education of an intellectual kind; accomplishments such as music, dancing, and embroidering being considered more feminine, and the amount paid for Mary Mason's "book-learning" suggests that it



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was of an elementary character. She was, however, sent to a dancing school for a year and a half, which doubtless finished her for colonial society.

In 1740 Reverend James Marye opened a school in Fredericksburg to which in course of time went Washington, Madison, and Monroe.

Occasionally a colored servant was permitted to go to school with the children of his master. Colonel and Mrs. James Gordon, of Lancaster, were interested in a little country school in their neighborhood, taught by a schoolmaster named Criswell, and frequently visited the school and gave the children treats. On January 16, 1759, Colonel Gordon records in his journal, "Sent Molly and her maid, Judith, to school to Mr. Criswell." In 1760 this school had thirteen Latin and four English students.

Fithian took a youth who waited on the table at "Nomini Hall" into school there.

The Reverend Jonathan Boucher, in his "Reminiscences," tells of his experiences first as a tutor in the home of Captain Dixon, at Port Royal, Virginia, and later as master of a country boarding school when he was rector of St. Mary's Parish, Caroline County, from about 1763 to 1774. He says he had "nearly thirty" boys, "most of them sons of persons of the first condition in the Colony," all of whom boarded with him.

The yellowed columns of the old *Virginia Gazette* show advertisements for teachers for both schools and private families, and those of various qualifications are wanted from "a sober person of good morals capable of teaching children to read English well and to write and cipher," to "a single man capable of teaching Greek, Latin and the mathematicks." In 1739 Thomas Brewer, of Nansemond County, advertises that "any sober person duly qualified

to keep a country school can be assured of twenty-four scholars," and in 1775 a schoolmaster "unexceptionable in point of character" and "able to teach the English, Latin and Greek languages in their purity and elegance; writing, arithmetick, accounts and the mathematicks," is wanted to open a school for boys and girls in Port Royal. The advertisement adds that "a commodious schoolhouse has lately been built and free use of it will be granted."

The great mass of family papers used by Alexander Brown in "The Cabells and their Kin" throws much light on education in the colony. When Doctor William Cabell settled near the Blue Ridge, within the present Amherst or Nelson County, then a frontier section, schools were doubtless scarce there, but the correspondence between himself and his wife during his absence in England, from 1735 to 1741, shows constant solicitude for the education of their children. Their son William, at the age of eight, could "read well and had commenced learning to write." In 1737 another son, Joseph, five years old, had begun to go to school, and two years later he could read well. The Cabell papers preserve the names of a number of early teachers in this part of the colony, among them William Ward, 1741; William Cox, 1762; John Clay, 1763-64; Roderick McCulloch, 1768-69, and Reverend James Maury, to whose Classical School, in Albemarle County, went Thomas Jefferson, Bishop Madison, John Taylor, of Caroline, Dabney Carr, Sr., and other distinguished men. Mr. Brown says:

"It was the custom of the landed gentry of this region, with their minor children, that first one and then another of a circle of friends would employ a tutor and take the sons of the others as boarders. Thus in 1768-69 the tutor was at 'Union Hill,' the home of Colonel William Cabell;

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in 1770-71, at Colonel Peter Fontaine's; in 1772-73, at Colonel John Nicholas's, and in 1774-75 again at 'Union Hill.' There were also teachers of music, of dancing and of fencing who gave lessons by the month or quarter."

About 1750 Robert Alexander, a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, settled in Rockbridge County and taught the first classical school west of the Blue Ridge, and the Augusta Records show that there were a good number of little schools across the mountains. About 1759 Frederick Upp, lay reader of the "Church on the Fork," agreed with his flock to keep school for six months at twelve shillings and a bushel of wheat for each child, but residents of another neighborhood promised him thirty-four children—a larger number than the congregation on the Fork could assure him—and he went to them. In 1766 we find Charles Knight, another Valley schoolmaster, agreeing with his patrons to teach for a salary of eighteen pounds sterling a year and have every other Saturday or half of every Saturday off, and "if any alarm of the Indians comes they are to provide shelter, food and drink."

The very great number of wills of both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which direct that boys and girls should be sent to school bear witness to both the general desire to have children educated and the accessibility of every part of the colony to schools of some sort. Men of means who lived in remote or frontier counties were often not satisfied with the elementary ones within their reach and directed that their children be sent where they could have better advantages. For instance, Philip Buckner, of Stafford, in 1699, requested in his will that his brothers who lived in York County "take his sons down with them that they might have learning."

A few of the many whose wills provided for education

in the earlier century were Humphrey Clark, 1655; Ann Littleton, widow of Colonel Nathaniel Littleton, 1656; Richard Briggs, 1679; Thomas Parnell, 1687, who wished two sons and four daughters to be "brought up in the fear of the Lord and to learn to wright and reade," and Thomas Brereton, 1698, who directed that his son Thomas be "put to school to be taught to read, write and cypher, and if possible, the Latin tongue."

Many fathers, like Edmund Berkeley, of "Barn Elms," in 1710, direct that their sons be "kept at school until they arrive at ye age of twenty-one years." Others like Reverend Charles Andrews, in 1712, desire their "children to have a liberal education."

Wills of women show an equally careful provision for the training of their children. In that of Mrs. Elizabeth Churchill, made in 1716, she says:

"I desire that Mr. Bartholomew Yates undertake the instruction of my son, Armistead Churchill, and instruct him in his own house in Latin and Greek." Mr. Yates "is to be given yearly two of the best beeves and four of the best hogs, over and above what he shall demand for teaching and board."

Not all parents aspired to a classical education for their sons. Many carefully arranged that they should have practical training. In 1718 Samuel Matthews, of Richmond County, a man of considerable estate, and a descendant of hospitable Governor Matthews, directed in his will that his two eldest sons be apprenticed one to a master of a ship and the other to a good house carpenter.

Thomas Lee, of "Stratford," one of the wealthiest men in the colony and the father of six distinguished Lees, in his will made in 1749-50, requested the guardians of his sons to educate them as they thought fit, "Religiously and



By courtesy of Harper's Magazine

RALPH WORMELEY, OF "ROSEGILL," VIRGINIA, AND OF TRINITY COLLEGE,  
CAMBRIDGE



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Virtuously," and, if necessary, to bind them to any trade or profession, that they might "learn to get their living honestly."

Some, like Edward Scott, a member of the House of Burgesses for Goochland, and Matthew Hubbard, a York County planter of good family, directed that their sons be given the best education their estates afforded "until sixteen," and then bound out to a trade. Thomas Reynolds, of Yorktown, in his will made in 1759, wished his son to be educated "in writing and accounts and the most useful branches of mathematics, as geometry, trigonometry, gauging, dialing, surveying, gunnery, with a knowledge of the French tongue," and afterward "to be bound to a good trading merchant such as trade to sea."

Others, like Cadwallader Dade, of Stafford, 1760, simply desired that their sons "have as good an education as the estate can afford." In this year Gawin Corbin of "Peckatone," Westmoreland, directed in his will that his only child, Martha Corbin, be given "a genteel education," and in 1765 Beverley Stanard, of Spotsylvania, ordered that his "sons William and Larkin Stanard be put to schools and continued at them until they are liberally and genteelly educated."

A quaint direction was that of George Caplener, a German settler in The Valley, who in his will in 1773 desired that his two oldest sons "lorn the two youngest boys to read through the Salter."

### III—TUTORS

Many of the larger planters employed tutors for children who were not sent abroad to be educated, and sometimes for those that were, during their tender years. They usually "kept school" in a wing of the great house or in one of the smaller out-buildings which often provided not only a school-room but lodgings for the tutor and sometimes for the boys of the family. The tutor generally had leave to increase his income by additions to the school of children of the neighborhood—rich or poor—and occasionally young friends or relatives of the family from too great a distance to come and go each day were taken as guests or boarders in order that they might have the advantage of being under an accomplished teacher.

The tutors were educated men—or sometimes women—from the mother country, or from other colonies, who came to Virginia to seek a livelihood, or residents of Virginia whose only fortune was a small or great store of learning. Sometimes they were Englishmen "of parts" in such hard luck that they sold themselves into servitude to keep soul and body together. Colonel John Carter, of "Corotoman," directed in his will, made in 1669, that his son Robert—the famous "King" Carter—be well educated that he might be equipped to manage his estate, adding, "and he is to have a man or youth servant bought for him that hath been brought up in the Latin school and that he (the servant) shall constantly tend upon him, not only to teach him his books, either in English or Latin, according to his capacity (for my will is that he shall learn both English and Latin, and to write) and also to preserve him from harm and doing evil."

Robert Carter's letters show that he was at one time at school in England.



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In 1774 John Harrower, a young married man of blameless life, of the Orkney Islands, after a desperate struggle to support his family, took ship for Virginia, and sold himself for a term of years to Colonel William Daingerfield, of "Belvidera," near Fredericksburg. His diary, containing copies of affectionate letters to his wife and expressing trust in God through all of his misfortunes, shows that this "servant" tutor was treated as much like a member of the family at "Belvidera" as was Philip Fithian, the Princeton divinity student at "Nomini Hall." Not so well satisfied was John Warden, a Scotchman, educated at Edinburgh, and "a good scholar in Greek, Latin, Philosophy, and Mathematics," who in 1769 was a tutor for Colonel Thomas Jones. In a grumbling letter to a brother of his employer, in London, he complained that though he was much better treated than most of his profession, he found he was "less looked upon as a Gentleman in Virginia" than before he became a tutor and he was "much at a loss for a room to retire to at night to study."

Colonel Jones replied that Mr. Warden was "put to no inconvenience with regard to a place to retire to or anything else," and continued: "He has a house about three hundred yards from mine, 24 feet square, I think, with two rooms, one his lodging room and the other the school room, extremely warm and light, a plank floor, plastered and white-finished walls, a brick chimney with two good fire-places, has furniture—as good a bed as any in my house, chairs, bookcase, &c. and a boy of 16 yrs. attends him . . . he has candles when he pleases and generally burns three large mould candles of myrtle wax and tallow in six nights, has nobody to interrupt him, comes to the house by day or night when he pleases, is company for every Gent. that

visits me . . . Fact is he is a good Tutor and a good sort of man, but that cursed pride so inherent in these people is most insufferable."

Occasionally the position of tutor was a stepping-stone to becoming a planter, as in the case of one employed by William Reynolds, of Northumberland, in 1655, who in addition to his board and lodging was to have, when his three years of teaching were over, free use of land in which to plant corn and tobacco and barns in which to store his crops; and another who, in 1666, was paid in land for giving "one year's schooling" to the daughter of Francis Browne of Rappahannock County.<sup>3</sup>

Among very early tutors whose names have been preserved were Samuel Motherhead, employed by Nathaniel Pope, in 1652; John Johnson, by John Rogers, in 1655; Robert Jones, by John Hansford, in 1662; Richard Burkland, employed by Richard Kellam, in 1663, to give his daughter lessons in reading and writing and casting accounts; Mary Coar, employed a little later to teach Martha Willett; Richard Glover, employed by Francis Browne; Henry Spratt, by George Ashwell, in 1668; Catherine Shrewsbury, by Richard Tompkins, in 1693; John Waters, to teach William Tunstall, in 1694; John Matts, by Charles Leatherbury, in 1678. Many more might be named for later years.<sup>4</sup>

In 1741 William Beverley, of "Blandfield," Essex County, wrote his London merchant to send him a "school-master" to teach his children to "read, write and cipher," adding that the usual salary paid in Virginia for a Scotch

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<sup>3</sup> Bruce's "Institutional History of Virginia in the 17th Century," i, 324.

<sup>4</sup> Bruce's "Institutional History of Virginia in the 17th Century," 324, 329.

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master was twenty pounds sterling, with board, "but they commonly teach the children the Scotch dialect, which they never can wear off."

Here is a letter in which a lively little schoolgirl, Maria Carter, of "Sabine Hall," tells her cousin Maria Carter, of "Cleve," about her daily routine under a tutor:

March 25, 1756.

My Dear Cousin:

You have really imposed a Task upon me which I can by no means perform viz: that of writing a merry & comical Letter: how shou'd I, my dear, that am ever confined either at School or with my Grandmama know how the world goes on? Now I will give you the History of one Day the Repetition of which without variations carries me through the three hundred and sixty five Days, which you know compleats the year. Well then first begin, I am awakened out of a sound sleep with some croaking voice either Patty's, Milly's, or some other of our Domestic with Miss Polly Miss Polly get up, tis time to rise, Mr. Price is down stairs, & tho' I hear them I lie quite snugg till my Grandmama uses her Voice, then up I get, huddle on my cloaths & down to Book, then to Breakfast, then to School again, & may be I have an Hour to my self before Dinner, then the Same Story over again till twilight, & then a small portion of time before I go to rest, and so you must expect nothing from me but that I am Dear Cousin,  
Most Affectionately Yours,

MARIA CARTER.

Harry Turner, of King George County, directed in his will that his son Thomas should have the best education to be gotten in Virginia. His father, Thomas Turner, who outlived him, made his will in 1757 directing that no expense should be regarded in giving not only little Thomas but all his grandsons a "finished education." He wished them all to be taught by the same tutor, in a house to be fitted up for them on his estate, and four negroes selected to wait on them.

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When Philip Fithian opened school in one of the brick out-buildings at "Nomini Hall," he had eight pupils—the two sons and five daughters of Colonel Carter, and a nephew. The youngest daughter, Harriet, was "beginning her letters, and the oldest son, Ben, studying Latin grammar and reading Sallust. The second son, Bob, was in love with one of the Tayloe girls of "Mt. Airy," and begged Mr. Fithian to teach him Latin, as Mrs. Tayloe had playfully told him that "without he understands Latin he will never be able to win a young lady of Family & fashion for his wife."

In addition to other tutors in the neighborhood of "Nomini" the Corbins of "Peckatone" and the Turbervilles of "Hickory Hill" had governesses from England.



JOHN BAYLOR, OF "NEW MARKET," VIRGINIA, AND OF  
CAIUS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE



IV—WILLIAM AND MARY COLLEGE

The year 1660 saw a revival of interest in giving Virginians opportunities of higher education within the colony—originating this time with the General Assembly, which proposed to establish a “college of students of the liberal arts.” Governor Berkeley and members of the Council headed the list of subscribers, but money was scarce, the troubles which brought on Bacon’s Rebellion were already brewing, and the project fell through.

In 1689 affairs of both Church and State in Virginia fell under the control of enthusiasts for education when Francis Nicholson was sent over as Governor and James Blair as Commissary to the Bishop of London—which placed him at the head of the clergy. The result was a speedy revival of the “design of a free school and college” whose special objects were to be the education of the colonists’ sons, the education and conversion of the Indians, and the training of ministers to fill the parish churches.

The Assembly responded with quick sympathy, plans to raise money in the colony were made, and Doctor Blair was chosen as agent for the projected college and sent to England to procure a charter and endowment. He succeeded in interesting their Majesties King William and Queen Mary, as well as the Archbishop of Canterbury and other dignitaries. When introduced to the King he knelt down and, presenting the petition with which the Assembly had entrusted him, said:

“Please, your Majesty, here is an humble supplication from the government of Virginia for your Majesty’s charter to erect a free school and college for the education of their youth.”

“Sir,” replied his Majesty, “I am glad that the Colony

is upon so good a design, and will promote it to the best of my power."

After being held up by much red tape the charter for the College of William and Mary was signed in February, 1693, and Doctor Blair set sail for Virginia armed not only with the coveted paper, but with sufficient endowment to make the long delayed institution something more than a castle in the air.

A site "near the church in Middle Plantation old fields" was selected, and the plan, "designed to be an entire square when completed," was drawn by Sir Christopher Wren; but not until 1697 were the front and the north sides of the square finished. During its earliest years the college was only a grammar school where boys were taught reading and writing, Latin and Greek. Its faculty consisted of the president, Doctor Blair; the grammar master, Mr. Mungo Inglis, who was an accomplished Master of Arts; an usher who assisted him and a "writing master." In 1698 a committee composed of members of the faculty and four students addressed a letter to the "Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Burgesses," thanking them in the name of the "President, Master and scholars of William and Mary" for gracing the college exercises "with their own countenance and presence on May Day."

The first regular commencement was held in 1700, and besides many planters with their families and some of the Indians from the country around, it is written that visitors came in sloops from New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland.

After the long succession of discouragements and postponements a college in Virginia seemed now to have made a good beginning, but on an October night in 1705 a fire broke out in the building and the hope and work of years



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went up in flames. However, the friends of education plucked up courage again. Though the building was gone, the faculty and students remained. Doctor Blair bestirred himself to raise more money and declined to accept his salary as President for some years, the Assembly levied extra taxes, and William and Mary was rebuilt on its original walls. The restoration was not complete until 1723, but the classes had been continued and the college grew and developed in the meantime.

In 1711 a professor of natural philosophy and mathematics was engaged. In 1712 there were twenty Indian boys in attendance—among them the son of the queen of Pamunkey and the son of the king of the Nottoways.

In 1723 the Brafferton Building was erected on the campus to the right of the main building, out of the proceeds of the Brafferton estate in England—which was part of the endowment of the college—and devoted to the Indian school, and it was hoped that the Indian youths christianized and educated would become missionaries to their own people, but instead they returned to idolatry and barbarism.

In 1729 the college could boast of a president and six professors, and in 1732 a commodious home for the president was built.

But the picture has its dark side. Almost from the beginning William and Mary was embroiled in contentions. Doctor Blair and Governor Nicholson—its earnest promoters and friends, but both of them men of unyielding will—soon fell out over it, and later the able but stubborn President quarrelled also with the successors of the able but stubborn Governor. Nevertheless, the college became and remained the pet and pride of Virginia. As early as 1694 John Mann, of Gloucester County, bequeathed his

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land—if his family should become extinct—“ for ye maintenance of poore children at ye college.” Many others from that time on made it gifts or showed their regard for it by directing in their wills that their sons be educated there, and a long roll of distinguished Virginians and Americans of the Colonial period, and after it, have claimed old William and Mary as their Alma Mater.

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### V—STUDYING ABROAD

An amazing number of Virginia boys and a few girls were sent to England and Scotland to school or college or both—the more amazing when the perils of the voyage and the long waits between letters to and from their parents are considered. And new perils awaited them over sea—smallpox was rampant in Great Britain. Michel greatly exaggerated when writing, in 1701, of the education of Virginians abroad, he says, “Not many of them came back. Most of them died of smallpox.” But in 1724 we find Hugh Jones writing that more of them would be sent over “were they not afraid of smallpox which most commonly proves fatal to them.”

Lord Adam Gordon says in his journal that most of the gentlemen he met during his visit to Virginia a few years before the Revolution were educated “at home”—meaning in England.

It will be remembered that one of the reasons given for the attempted founding of the East Indian School, in 1621, was that planters had been “constrained” to send their children “home” to be taught. The destruction of the records makes it impossible to say who any of these earliest Virginia students abroad and many of the later ones were, and—with the exception of Oxford—such records of English institutions of learning as have been preserved have not been fully examined. When they are, it is certain that the number—already large—of Colonial Virginia boys known to have been educated at the famous schools and great universities of the Mother Country will be greatly increased. Among the earliest of these students abroad of whom we have any testimony were Thomas Willoughby, of Lower Norfolk, who was at the Merchant Tailors’ School in London, in 1644, and Augustine War-

ner, Jr., of Gloucester—an ancestor of Washington—who was there in 1658.

John Lee, of Westmoreland, entered Queen's College, Oxford, in 1658, and was graduated as a Bachelor of Arts in 1662. He presented his college with a silver cup bearing the Lee arms, which may still be seen there.

A number of Virginia families sent generation after generation of boys to school or college in England. For instance Ralph Wormeley, Secretary of State of the Colony, entered Oriel College, Oxford, in 1665, at the age of fifteen, and at the time of his death, in 1701, his sons, Ralph and John, were being educated abroad. Interesting letters from "King" Carter in regard to these boys, who were his nephews—or "cousins" as he calls them—and who became his wards, have been preserved. In one of these, written in 1702 to Thomas Corbin, the London merchant, he says:

"Am glad to hear my Coz'ns Ralph Wormeley and Jno Wormeley thrive so fast in their learning." A month later he suggests, "If you can Retrench their Expenses what Reasonably you can twill be a kindness to the Boyes," adding that he had noticed when he was at school in England himself that "those Boys that wore the finest close and had ye most money in their pockets still went away with the least learning in their heads. Yett I am nott for too narrow a keeping."

In a letter to Corbin four years later he writes: "I am sorry Mons'r Ralph is angry with us, if it be for ordering his keeping within Suitable limits wee must take no notice of it, he will in time see his own folly."

A third Ralph Wormeley, the grandson of Colonel Carter's ward, went to Eton in 1757, and afterward to Trinity College, Cambridge. An interesting portrait of

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## EDUCATION

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him in cap and gown, and many books containing his armorial book-plate, remain.

Colonel John Catlett, of Rappahannock, who died about 1670, directed in his will that his children be educated in England out of his estate there, and John Savage, of Northampton, who made his will in 1678, was another of the many—early and late—who directed that a son, or sons, be educated in England without naming any special school.

Sometimes mere infants made the long, difficult voyage for the sake of an English education. Letters of William Byrd, the first, who was then living in Henrico County, on the frontier, show that in 1683 his son William—nine years old—and his daughter Susan—about six—were at school in England and being watched over by their grandparents, the Warham Horsmandens, of Purleigh, in Essex, and that in 1685 plans were making to send over his baby girl Ursula, affectionately nicknamed “Little Nutty,” who was only four. In March of that year he wrote “Father Horsmanden,” as he called his father-in-law:

“We received yours by Mr. Broadnax, which was a great satisfaction to hear of you and our Children’s Welfare. My wife hath all this year urged mee to send little Nutty home to you, to which I have at last condescended and hope you’ll please excuse the trouble. I must confesse she could learn nothing good here in a great family of negroes.”

On the same day he wrote “Will”:

“Dear Son, I received your letter and am glad to hear you are with so good a Master who I hope will see you improve your time and that you bee carefull to serve God as you ought, without which you cannot expect to doe well here or hereafter.”

Ursula was sent over in charge of a maid and she and

Susan were at school at Hackney until 1691, but, alack-a-day, the nut-brown Ursula had not long to enjoy the accomplishments she went so far to acquire, for ere she was quite seventeen she lay in Jamestown churchyard, under a stone bearing the arms of Byrd and Beverley impaled and an inscription which said she had been the wife of Robert Beverley—the historian—and left a son. William remained long abroad receiving the polish for which he was afterward noted. The epitaph on his tomb in the garden at “Westover” says:

“He was early sent to England for his education, where under the care and direction of Sir Robert Southwell and ever favored with his particular instructions, he made a happy proficiency in polite and varied learning. He was called to the bar in the Middle Temple, studied for sometime in the Low Countries, visited the Court of France and was chosen Fellow of the Royal Society.”

It was not unusual for a parent to have several children at school in England at the same time. One of these was Colonel John Baylor, of Caroline County, who had received his own education at Putney Grammar School and Caius College, Cambridge. In 1762 he sent his twelve-year-old son, John, to Putney, and later entered him at Caius College, where he was a friend and classmate of William Wilberforce. He also sent his daughters, Courtney, Lucy, Frances, and Elizabeth, abroad to boarding school, placing them at Croyden, in Kent.

Among other families a number of whose members were educated abroad were those of Robinson, Randolph, Grymes, Bland, Meade, Corbin, and Lee.

Daniel McCarty, of Westmoreland, in his will, made in 1724, said that his son Daniel was then in England being educated, and that he wished his younger sons to be “one



THOMAS NELSON

Signer of the Declaration of Independence. When at Hackney School,  
England, 1754





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a lawyer, one a divine, one a physician, chirurgon, or mariner, in the Secretary's office or any other lawful employment their inclination leads them to; but rather to the axe or the hoe than to be suffered to live in idleness and extravagancy."

Robert Bolling, of "Chellowe," Buckingham County, was at school in Wakefield, Yorkshire, under the "celebrated Mr. John Clarke," from 1751 to 1755, and according to his kinsman, John Randolph, of Roanoke, wrote equally well in Latin, French, and Italian. Theodorick Bland, grandson of the little Richard Bland, whose cow went to boarding school with him in Henrico, was at school and college abroad for eleven consecutive years. In 1753 when he was eleven, he was sent to Wakefield. Five years later he was still there and the head-master reported that he was in the second class and read Xenophon and Horace with tolerable ease, but like most of the boys composed wretchedly, especially in Latin. In 1761 he went to Edinburgh to study medicine.

Among the Bland papers are "Articles relating to the Virginia Club—1761," at Edinburgh. All members were to be Virginia boys, who wished to take a degree in medicine, and the club was "solely for the improvement of the members in anatomy (which is justly said to be the bones of Physic)." The same papers contain a letter in Bland's handwriting, from the Virginia Medical Students at Edinburgh, to the Council and Burgesses of Virginia, asking that laws be passed to prevent unlicensed persons from practising physic in the colony.

Peter Hog, of Augusta County, in The Valley, directed in his will, made in 1773, that his sons be sent to Edinburgh to be educated.

John and Landon Carter, sons of Charles Carter of

"Cleve," were being educated in England in 1764 when their father made his will, directing that "They shall continue at school to learn the languages, mathematics, philosophy, dancing and fencing till they are well accomplished and of proper age to be bound to some reputable, sober, discreet practising attorney, till they arrive at the age of twenty years and nine months," when they were to return to Virginia. He desired that a suitable present be made to the gentleman to whom they were bound, and that they be "by their masters permitted to attend Commons so as not to interfere with their studies and the practice and business of an attorney," and added:

"I do earnestly desire their guardians, as much as in their power lies, to prevent extravagance by limiting their pocket expenses, after they arrive at the age of eighteen to a sum not exceeding fifty pounds sterling money per annum, as their fortunes depend entirely upon the seasons of a most variable climate."

A suit in King George County records shows that John Taliaferro, Jr., was in England for his education for three years from 1764 to 1766, inclusive.

Here is as complete a list, with dates of entrance, as I am at present able to make of Colonial Virginia boys at college abroad:

At Cambridge:

(Trinity College) John Carter, 1714; Wilson Cary, 1721; Daniel Taylor, 1724; John Ambler, 1753; Robert Beverley, 1753; Ralph Wormeley, 1757; Thomas Smith, 1759; George Riddell, 1759. (Christ's College) William Spencer, 1684; Joseph Holt, 1716; Gawin Corbin, 1756; Thomas Nelson, 1761; George Fairfax Lee, 1772. (Caius College) John Baylor, 1722; Lewis Burwell, 1729; John

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Baylor, Jr., 1772. (Pembroke College) Thomas Clayton, about 1720; John Brunskill, 1752.

At Oxford:

(Oriental College) Ralph Wormeley, 1665; Christopher Robinson, 1721; his cousin Christopher Robinson, 1723; Chichley Thacker, 1724; Bartholomew Yates, 1732; Robert Yates, 1733; Peter Robinson, 1737; William Robinson, 1737. (Queen's College) John Lee, 1658; John Span, 1705; William Stith, 1724. (St. John's College) Mann Page, 1709; (Christ's Church College) Henry Fitzhugh, 1722; (Balliol College) Lewis Burwell, 1765; (Brasenose College) Bartholomew Yates, 1695.

At Edinburgh:

Valentine Peyton, 1754; James Blair, George Gilmer, Arthur Lee, William Bankhead, Theodorick Bland and John Field, in 1761; James Tapscott and Corbin Griffin, 1765; Cyrus Griffin, about 1767; George Steptoe, 1767; Walter Jones and Joseph Goodwin, 1769; Archibald Campbell, John M. Galt, James McClurg and John Ravenscroft, 1770; Isaac Hall, 1771; William Ball, 1773; John Griffin and Philip Turpin, 1774; Lawrence Brooke, 1776; Richard Bland, date unknown.

At the Middle Temple:

William Byrd, the second, 1690; Peyton Randolph (first President of the Continental Congress), 1739; George Carter, about 1740; John Randolph, 1745; John Blair, 1755; Gawin Corbin, 1756; William Fautleroy, 1760; Gustavus Scott, 1767; Henry Lee Ball, 1769; Arthur Lee, 1770; Walter Atchison and Cyrus Griffin, 1771; Henry Lee and Joseph Ball Downman, 1773.

At the Inner Temple:

Philip Alexander, 1760; Alexander White, 1762; Philip Ludwell Lee, about 1747; Lewis Burwell, 1765.

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COLONIAL VIRGINIA, ITS PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS

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At Gray's Inn:

Henry Perrott, 1674; Sir John Randolph, 1715;  
Joseph Ball, 1720.

At King's College, Aberdeen:

Gustavus Scott, 1765; John Scott, 1768.

Many more boys, of course, attended the various schools. They went in goodly number to Wakefield, in Yorkshire; Putney Grammar School, Mile End School, near London; the Merchant Tailors' School, London; St. Bees Grammar School, Wood End Grammar School, Scotland; Dalston, Harrow, Appleby, Winchester, Leeds and Eton.

Augustine Washington—father of George—and his sons, Augustine and Lawrence, were at school at Appleby.

Among those who are known to have been at Eton are Mann Page, 1706; Lewis Burwell, 1725; Arthur Lee, 1753; Ralph Wormeley, 1757; James Burwell, Philip Ludwell Grymes, John Randolph Grymes, Alexander Spotswood and John Spotswood, all in 1760; Beverley Randolph and William Randolph, 1762.

In 1769 the "Academy at Leeds, York County, England, Mr. Aaron Grimshaw, Master," advertised for pupils in the *Virginia Gazette*.

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## XI BOOKS

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At least two of the first comers to Virginia in 1607 are known to have brought books with them. Smith's "Historie," describing the burning of Jamestown in the winter of that year says:

" Good Master Hunt our Preacher lost all his Library."

In June, 1608, President Wingfield, in defending himself from the charge that he was an atheist because he "carryed not a Bible with him," said that he had "sorted many books" to take to Virginia, among them a Bible, but could not say whether it was—like others he had missed—"Ymbeasiled" from the trunk in which they were packed before he left England, or "mislayed" by his servants.

The inventory made in 1626, of Parson Bucke, who officiated at the first marriage and the first christening at Jamestown, mentions this library, and doubtless others of the educated men who came over early brought books. At least one of them, George Sandys, Treasurer of the colony in the early sixteen-twenties, was the author of highly praised works of the day in poetry and prose—notably his "Travels," his metrical version of the Psalms, and his translations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the first book of the *Æneid*, which were written at Jamestown soon after the Massacre and published in England, first in 1626, and later, in folio, and richly illustrated, in 1632.

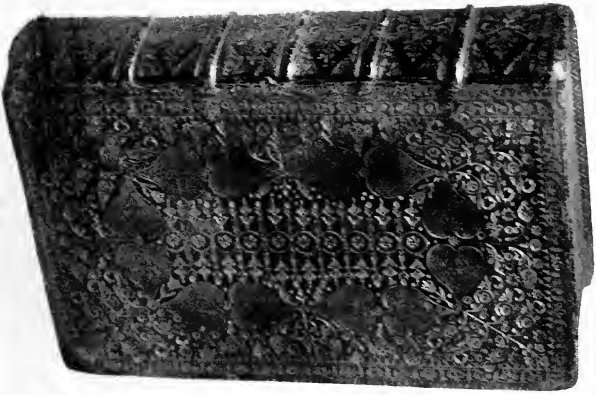
The student is again handicapped by absence of records for the early years, and owing to the inaccessibility of many of those that have been preserved few of them have been

thoroughly searched, but examples from Albemarle, Westmoreland, Amherst, Middlesex and other counties far removed from each other show how widespread was the ownership of books. My own notes furnish proof of six hundred collections, varying in size from two or three volumes to several thousand.

The Bible and Prayer Book were evidently in nearly every home, while other books, from "a parcel," valued at a shilling or two, to "a library" worth many pounds sterling, were bequeathed by a great number of those who made wills and named in the inventories of a great number of those who left goods worth appraising. It must be remembered that a parcel refers here to a lot or quantity, not to a package.

In many instances no titles are given, but, where they are, most of the collections show a preponderance of religious works, a good percentage of history, travel, science, law, and philosophy, a good percentage of the classics and of French and Spanish books, and a good percentage of English literature. Here are a few characteristic samples from early collections:

Doctor John Holloway, of Northampton County, bequeathed, in 1643, all his physic and surgery books, all his Latin and Greek books and his Greek Testament in folio. In 1645 Arthur Smith, of Isle of Wight, simply bequeathed "all" his books, and was one of many who thus vaguely described their libraries. Michael Sparke, stationer, of London, in his will made in 1653, gave to Virginia and Barbadoes, each, one hundred copies of "the Second part of Crums of Comfort with groanes of the Spirite and Hankerchieffes of wet eies, ready bound to be distributed amongst the poore children there that can read." Poor little children of Virginia and Barbadoes!



Sarah Page. 1759.  
Book Page 1788 -  
" " 1843 -  
Mary Mann Page Williamson  
1843 -  
Arthur Page & Rowland  
1876 -  
Mary Newton's Almanac  
1906 -

COLONIAL BIBLE WITH FLY-LEAF SHOWING OWNERS IN FIVE GENERATIONS





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## BOOKS

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In 1655 William Brocas, of Lancaster County, left a parcel of old torn books "most of them Spanish, Italian and Latin," appraised at a hundred pounds of tobacco. In 1669 Colonel John Carter, of "Corotoman," bequeathed his wife "David's Tears, Byfield's Treatise, The Whole Duty of Man and her own books." Poor Mrs. Carter! In 1690 his son John left books whose sixty-three titles included works in English, French, Spanish, Latin, and Greek. In the small collection of books left by Matthew Hubard, of York County, in 1670, were John Smith's "Historie of Virginia," Ben Jonson's "Remains," Purchas's "Pilgrims," Donne's "Poems," and "Astrea, a French Romance."

The inventory of Mrs. Sarah Willoughby of Lower Norfolk County, 1674, describes "a parcell of books" in her room appraised at fifteen hundred pounds of tobacco. They were fifty-six in number and included religious works—among them "A Sweet Posie for God's Saints," essays—among them Montaigne's; travels—among them Sandys'; history, biography, astronomy, mathematics, some of the works of Virgil, Ovid, and Cicero, "a book of Latin verse," and Æsop's Fables.

John Baskerville, of York, left in 1675 "a parcel of English books," appraised at three pounds sterling, and "a parcel of Latin books," at one pound.

James Porter, of Lower Norfolk, seems to have been an author, for in 1684 he left forty-two books and twelve manuscripts.

In 1690 William Byrd, the first, was evidently laying the foundation of the noted "Westover" library. In that year he spent for books thirty-five pounds and fourteen shillings—a sum equal to over five hundred dollars today. In 1691 William Fitzhugh, of the remote frontier

county of Stafford, wrote to his brother who was on a visit to England to bring him the third part of "Rushworth's Collections," and "Cornelius Agrippa's Occult Philosophy, in English if it can be had, if not in Latin," and added "some of the newest books if they be ingenious, will be mighty welcome." Among other additions to his large library, Colonel Fitzhugh ordered from London, in 1695, Virgil in English, and Horace, Juvenal, and Perseus in Latin and English. In 1701 he bequeathed his "study of books" to his two sons.

In 1690 Samuel Ball, of Lower Norfolk, left a hundred and three books. In 1692 Thomas Osborne, of Henrico, left "Josephus in quarto" and half a dozen other "old books."

In 1692 John Sandford, of Princess Anne County, left, in one parcel, twenty-three Latin and Greek books, in another twenty-five English books, and in another five Hebrew books and a Greek Testament.

In 1693 Nathaniel Hill, a schoolmaster of Henrico County, on the frontier, left among his little collection of twenty-three volumes a large Bible and "sixteen play books." Henry Randolph of the same county left in 1693 twenty-nine folio volumes, eighty-seven quartos and fifty octavos—the whole appraised at fourteen pounds ten shillings, amounting to at least three hundred dollars to-day. In 1697 Captain John Cocke, of Princess Anne, left among his thirty-odd books—for the most part historical and religious works—"The History of a Coy Lady." In 1698 John Washington, of Westmoreland, left "a parcel of old books" valued at two hundred pounds of tobacco. In 1699 Arthur Spicer, of Richmond County, left a good-sized library—mainly law, religious, and Latin books, but among them "Icon Basilice," Bacon's "Advancement of

Learning," Raleigh's "History of the World," and a copy of "Macbeth."

As time went on, libraries became larger and more varied in interest, and many Virginians kept in close touch with English booksellers. Robert Beverley, writing of his visit to England in 1703, speaks of "my bookseller" as familiarly as if he lived in London, and about seventy years later Jefferson says:

"I wrote to Waller last June for forty-five pounds sterling worth of books. I have written to Benson Fearon for another parcel of nearly the same amount."

In the eighteenth century, as in the seventeenth, it is often impossible to get, from the reference, any idea of the size or character of a library. For instance, George Lee, of Westmoreland, in 1761, bequeathed his son George Fairfax Lee "all his mother's and my books," and Willoughby Newton, of the same county, in 1767, as vaguely left his son John "all" his books.

Others were more definite, among them Wilson Cary who in 1772 directed his executors to "send to England for the following books, all lettered and bound in calf, viz.: the Spectator, Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir Charles Grandison, which books I give to my granddaughter Sarah Cary."

Susannah Livingston, in making her will in 1745, said:

"I give to Thomas Matthews the large Bible now in my house (for the good of his soul)."

Innumerable inventories merely mention "a parcel of books," like that of Charles Wortham, of Middlesex, 1743, whose parcel is valued at eighteen shillings. By reason of the varying degrees of knowledge—or ignorance—of the appraisers the valuation gives no clue to the number or character of books in these parcels.

In 1776 William Blackwell and William Venable, of Albemarle, each left "a quantity of books." One "quantity" is appraised at twenty-two shillings sixpence, and the other at thirteen shillings—and the reader is left guessing. When the number of books is given, the valuation is often distractingly variable, though there is occasionally some regard to proportion, as where William Kilpin, of Middlesex, 1717, is said to have had twenty books worth one pound three shillings, and those of John Warnock, of the same county, representing seventy-eight titles, are appraised at four pounds seven.

Many of the collections of medium size were valuable and interesting. Among the books of Hancock Lee, Northumberland County, 1710, were the first, second, and third parts of "Pilgrim's Progress"; among those of Leonard Tarrent, Essex, 1718, was "Locke on the Human Understanding." John Dunlop, Elizabeth City, 1728, had twenty-nine volumes, including "The Spectator," "The Rape of the Lock," and "The Constant Couple." Mark Bannerman, Middlesex, 1728, had fifty-three volumes; Charles Pasture, Henrico, 1736, had seventy-two volumes, including "Clarendon's History," "The Gentleman's Magazine for 1735," and Pope's "Letters"; Joseph Brock, Spotsylvania County, 1743, eighty-one books; and William Phillips, Essex, 1747, a collection in which sixty titles were represented, among them some Greek books.

John Buckner, Stafford, 1747, had eighty volumes; Sterling Clack, Brunswick County, 1751, books valued at five pounds seven shillings—including the works of Pope and Addison; and William Kennon, Chesterfield, 1757, books appraised at ten pounds. George Hedgman, Stafford, 1760, was one of the early Virginia readers of "Tom Jones."

Among the occasional inventories of libraries owned by women was that of Mailana Drayton, of Middlesex, who in 1760 had, among other volumes, eleven French books, "a parcel" of novels, "a parcel" of Latin books and six picture books.

Edward McDonald, of Augusta County, in 1760, Robert Burgess of Stafford, in 1761, and Richard Tutt of Spotsylvania, in 1767, had "The Spectator" among their books. And those of John Pleasants, of Cumberland, 1766, included "The Spectator," "Paradise Lost," "Paradise Regained," and Quarles' "Emblems." William Walker, Stafford, 1767, had among his sixty-four volumes Swift, Pope, "The Spectator," "Tatler," and "Guardian."

One of the larger libraries in the colony was that of Ralph Wormeley, of Middlesex, 1701, whose inventory names upwards of five hundred book titles, including Burnet's "History of the Reformation," "fifty comedies and tragedies in folio," Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity," the works of Bacon, Fuller, Davenant, Jeremy Taylor, Quarles, Waller, Montaigne, Baxter, Gower, Burton, Camden's "Britania," Herbert's "Poems," "Every Man in His Humor," "Hudibras," and "Don Quixote."

In the same year "Mr. Sehutt," a Huguenot, of Henrico County, left a large Bible, a "great parcel of books," two bales of books, and a trunk of unbound books.

Thomas Lawson, of Princess Anne, 1704, had a hundred and sixty-six volumes besides "some parcels of old books." Richard Lee, of Westmoreland, 1715, had distinctly a scholar's library of two hundred and eighty-two titles, containing works in Latin, Greek, and French and some Italian—for in the list appear the "Pastor Fido" and "Orlando Furioso." Among his English books were

Lord Bacon's works. Godfrey Pole, Northampton, 1716, had a hundred and twenty-two titles, including Chaucer, Cowley, Jeremy Taylor, Drayton, Waller, Hudibras, Bacon's "Essays," and "Paradise Lost"; Edmund Berkeley, Middlesex, 1719, a hundred and eight titles, among them "Locke on the Human Understanding," the "Decameron," and Shakespeare.

Daniel McCarty, of Westmoreland, left in 1724 a valuable collection including Latin and Greek works, law books, and history; and "King" Carter left in 1726 five hundred and twenty-one volumes consisting largely of Greek and Latin books, theology, and history.

The appraisers of the estate of Nathaniel Harrison, Surry, 1728, made no pretence to knowledge of literature. They dismissed his library with "in the study, books of several sorts and sizes," but the fact that they were in a "study" suggests a good-sized collection.

Robert Beverley, of Spotsylvania, at a time when only a sparse population lay between him and the mountains, had a library of two hundred and fifty volumes. It contained much Latin and Greek, books by Tillotson, Locke, Temple, Burnet, Bacon, Chillingworth and Pope, Evelyn's "Silva," "Paradise Lost," Shaftsbury's "Characteristics," the "Spectator" and "Tatler," "Hudibras," More's "Utopia" and the "Beggar's Opera." Doctor Charles Brown, Williamsburg, 1736, had five hundred and twenty-one volumes which an advertisement in the *Virginia Gazette* described as "the finest and most copious in the branches of Natural Philosophy and Physick ever offered for sale in the Colony," and Henry Fitzhugh of Stafford had a library appraised in 1743 at over two hundred and fifty-eight pounds sterling.

Richard Chichester, Lancaster, 1744, left two hundred



SOME VIRGINIA BOOK-PLATES





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## BOOKS

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volumes, and the inventory of Robert Brooke, of Essex, 1745, names a hundred and thirty-eight titles. Daniel Parke Custis, New Kent, 1757, the first husband of Mrs. Washington, left four hundred and ninety-nine volumes including the works of Fuller, Smollett, Cowley, Clarendon, Defoe, Dryden, Waller, Bacon, Pope, Swift, Taylor, Herbert, Steele, Johnson, Shakespeare, and Milton. John Waller, Spotsylvania, 1755, had a hundred and thirty-seven titles, besides magazines and newspapers. Among his books were "Paradise Lost," "Tale of a 'Tub," "Suckling's Works," "Robinson Crusoe," "Hudibras," "The Spectator," "The Dunciad," Dryden's "Satires," Pope's "Satires," Shakespeare's "Poems," "The Tatler," and Congreve's works. John Herbert, Chesterfield, 1760, had two hundred and forty-seven volumes including—besides Latin and Greek—Ben Jonson, Shakespeare, Cowley, Pope, Swift, Addison, Milton, Butler, Herbert, Pryor, and Bolingbroke. Augustine Washington, Westmoreland, 1762, left with other books, Virgil and various Latin books, Homer and Shakespeare.

In 1764 Colonel William Cabell of Amherst County ordered from England over forty-seven pounds worth of books. He had a fine library to which he generally added about fifty books a year. Henry Churchill, Fauquier County, 1762, left books valued at eighty-eight pounds, and Clement Reade of the frontier county of Lunenburg, 1763, at twenty-five pounds. George Johnston, Fairfax, 1769, who seconded Patrick Henry's famous speech in 1765, left a hundred and eighty-six volumes. Philip Ludwell, of "Greenspring," who had moved to England to live some years before and doubtless carried part of his library with him, left in Virginia, at his death, in 1767, four bookcases, a trunk and a box of books valued at two hundred and fifty pounds sterling. John Harvie,

of Albermarle, 1769, had a hundred and eighty-nine titles besides "a parcel of French and Latin books," and a number of books lent out.

John Baylor, of "New Market," Caroline County, in 1770, bequeathed his son John "all" his books and directed that he should pay to his brothers George and Robert twenty-five pounds sterling each to assist in a library "which," he concludes, "I highly recommend to be yearly added to." It was in this year that Thomas Jefferson lost by fire, his library valued at two hundred pounds sterling. In the year following John Mercer, of "Marlborough," Stafford, died leaving a library of fifteen hundred volumes, of which a catalogue has been preserved.

Robert Carter, of "Nomini Hall," had in 1772 a thousand and sixty-six volumes, among them the works of Locke, Clarendon, Bacon, Sidney, Dryden, Cowley, Robertson, Chaucer, Wycherley, Montaigne, Gay, Somerville, Thompson, Smollett, Donne, Sterne, Addison, Hume, Burnet, Molière, Waller, Pryor, More ("Utopia"), Shakespeare, Hobbes, Pope, Congreve, Vanbrugh, Swift, Shaftsbury, and Milton, and much Latin and Greek.

Charles Taylor, Southampton, 1773, bequeathed his "library of books." Jacob Hall, a tutor in the family of Thomas Nelson, of Yorktown, in 1775, writes of Colonel Nelson's "fine collection." At the same time Richard Bland, of Prince George, had "a library of books," and that of Ralph Wormeley, of "Rosegill," was noted.

The largest library of Colonial Virginia and the largest private library in Colonial America was that at "Westover," which contained nearly four thousand volumes. It was collected chiefly by William Byrd, the second, but some of the books were inherited from his father and others added by his son, the third William.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For catalogue see Bassett's "Writings of William Byrd."

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## BOOKS

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All of the books mentioned so far belonged to persons living east of the Blue Ridge. The Bible was in every home in The Valley, as in the older parts of the colony, and Waddell seemed to think it was the only book there, but there were many more than he suspected. For instance, the will of Hugh Thompson, 1757, the inventory of Robert Clark, 1759, the will of Bryan McDonald, 1759, and the inventories of John Buchanan and William Adair, 1763—the latter having two bookcases—show modest collections of books, while Thomas Lewis owned a large and valuable library embracing many of the most important works then extant.

Almost all of the ministers of the Established Church were well educated men who had good collections of books.

The libraries of Robert Hunt and Richard Bucke, of the Jamestown Church, have been mentioned. Other parsons who certainly owned books were Ralph Watson, of York, who, in 1645, left thirty folios and fifty quartos; Benjamin Doggett, of Lancaster, who in 1682 directed in his will that his books be "packed in a great chest" and sent to England for sale; John Waugh, of Stafford, whose library was appraised, in 1706, at three thousand pounds of tobacco, or about seventy-five pounds sterling; St. John Shropshire, Westmoreland, who left, in 1718, "a large library of books," valued at sixty pounds sterling; John Cargill, of Surry, who in 1732 left two hundred and seventy-five bound books "besides newspapers and pamphlets and books lent out"; Reverend William Dawson, President of William and Mary, who left, in 1752, "a choice collection of books"; Lewis Latane, Essex, 1737, one hundred titles; William Key, Lunenburg, 1764, one hundred and sixty-eight volumes; John Moncure, Stafford, 1765, a hundred and thirty-seven titles; William Dunlop, King

and Queen, 1769, "several thousand volumes in most arts and sciences"; James Marye, Albemarle, 1774, four hundred books and forty-four pamphlets.

The Presbyterian ministers were also men of culture and fond of books. Two early examples of those who left valuable collections in various languages were Josias Mackie, Princess Anne County, 1726, and Charles Jeffrey Smith, New Kent, 1771.

In May, 1768, Mr. William Rind, editor of the *Virginia Gazette*, announced in that paper:

"Gentlemen who chuse to subscribe to the Gentleman's or London Magazines, or for the Reviews will be regularly supplied from January next if they leave their names soon enough to have them imported by that time."

In July of the same year he offered for sale the "Virginia Almanack and Ladies' Diary for 1769, containing among other things, enigmas, acrostics, rebuses, queries, paradoxes, nosegays of flowers, plates of fruit and mathematical questions," and in the following February advertised for subscribers to a monthly "under the title of the American Magazine" to be published in Philadelphia by Lewis Nicola.

Fithian several times noted in his "Diary" the arrival at "Nomini" of magazines from London and Philadelphia and of the Williamsburg papers. Upon one occasion he writes:

"In a ship arrived in the Potomac Mr. Carter received half a dozen of the latest Gentleman's Magazines, with several other new books," and again "The English Magazines and Reviews arrived to-day."

In 1736 William Parks, then publisher of the *Virginia Gazette*, established a book store in Williamsburg, and among later capital city book stores was that of Dixon

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## BOOKS

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and Hunter, who in 1775 published a list of more than three hundred titles from their stock, including the works of Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Addison, Pope, Bunyan, Bacon, Josephus, Smollett, Gay, Swift, Blackstone, Johnson's Dictionary, Plutarch's "Lives," Smith's "History of Virginia," "Gil Blas," "Robinson Crusoe," "Tristram Shandy," "Tom Jones," the "Spectator," "Rambler" and "Tatler."

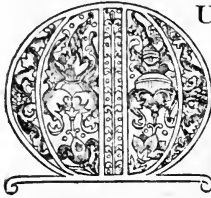
The *Gazette* also frequently advertised books by Virginia authors published and sold in Williamsburg.

There were doubtless book stores, or stores where books could be bought, in other Virginia towns in the eighteenth century, and the inventories of country merchants show that all of them had some books for sale.

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## XII MUSIC

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USIC of a simple and social kind—principally sentimental songs, ballads containing a story, tuneful airs and dances—entered largely into Colonial Virginia life. In the seventeenth century young women played on Queen Elizabeth's instrument, the virginal, and in the eighteenth on the spinet and harpsichord. Men, from the planter to his negro slave, scraped tunes from the violin—or the fiddle, as it was more often called—and everybody sang.

Captain John Utie, afterward a member of his Majesty's Council, was seen to "play upon the viol at sea" on his way to Virginia in 1620, and in much later times Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry turned for recreation to the fiddle and the bow.

In 1746 Henry Lee bequeathed among other servants one known as "the piper," and many an advertisement of a runaway slave declared "he can play on the violin," or "he took his fiddle with him." Owing to the popularity of dancing, ability to play on a musical instrument added to the slave's usefulness and value. For instance, this appeared in the *Gazette* in 1760:

"To be sold a young healthy negro fellow who has been used to wait on a gentleman and plays extremely well on the French horn."

In 1769 there was an advertisement for an "orderly negro or mulatto man who can play well on the violin," and the description of a runaway of 1775 declared:

"He played exceedingly on the banger and generally carries one with him."



ROBERT CARTER, OF "NOMINI HALL"

From a portrait by Reynolds





In 1757 Philip Ludwell Lee offered through the columns of the *Gazette* a handsome reward for the recovery of a runaway named Charles Love—a white indentured servant—who was described as “a professor of music, dancing and fencing.”

Musical instruments—especially violins—figure in wills and inventories throughout the Colonial period. In 1688 Thomas Jordan, of Surry, left “a pair of very old virginals” and a bass viol.

In the prosperous years from the middle of the eighteenth century to the Revolution a spinet or harpsichord seems to have been generally found in the home of the well-to-do planter, who had his girls taught to play, and music on one of these instruments—often with the addition of the flute or violin, or both—was a favorite diversion of the evening hours in both country and town. Frequently the instruments accompanied a love ditty sung by a fair daughter of the house, a rollicking song or a familiar hymn in which all the family joined, or broke into one of the dance tunes for which the young folk were always ready and in time to which the feet of the oldest within hearing patted sympathetically.

William Downman, of Richmond County, wrote his brother, in 1752:

“My little Rawlegh is a very brisk boy and sings mightily. He can sing almost any of the common tunes our fiddlers play.”

It is evident from allusions to music in Fithian's “Diary” that there were many harpsichords in the neighborhood of “Nomini Hall,” and that most of the girls of the Carters' circle played on them. A music teacher named Stadley taught in that part of the colony and spent several days at a time at “Nomini,” giving lessons to the girls. According to Fithian, all the young ladies at “Mt. Airy”

played well and of the much admired Jenny Washington, who was "about seventeen," he says:

"She plays well on the harpsichord & spinet, understands the principles of music and therefore performs her tunes in perfect time. . . . She sings likewise to her instrument."

"A Young Lady Singing to the Spinet" inspired "A Young Gentleman of Virginia" to an effusion in rhyme, printed in the *Virginia Gazette* in 1737. Here is a specimen stanza from some "Lines on Hearing a Young Lady Play on the Harpsichord" from the pen of one who "never attempted before anything in the poetical way," which appeared in that paper in 1769:

When Sukey to her harpsichord repairs  
And, smiling, bids me give attentive ears,  
With bliss supreme the lovely maid I view.  
But with reluctance forced to bid adieu,  
Her charms, I find, are on my heart impress'd,  
Nor time nor absence can regain my rest.

The *Gazette* contains an occasional advertisement of a musical instrument for sale, for instance this, in 1752:

"Just imported from London. A very neat hand organ in a mahogany case with gilt front, which plays sixteen tunes, on two barrels; it has four stops and everything in the best order."

And this, in 1767:

"To be sold for prime cost, a complete Harpsichord, with three stops, just imported from London, made by Kirpman, the Queen's instrument maker, and supposed by good judges to be the best in the Colony. Inquire of the printer."

In 1771 Jefferson, who was devoted to music, ordered from a London merchant a clavichord. But quickly followed his letter with another in which he says:

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## MUSIC

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“I have since seen a Forte piano and am charmed with it. Send me this instrument then, instead of the clavichord: let the case be of fine mahogany, solid, not veneered. The compass from Double G to F in alt. A plenty of spare strings and the workmanship on the whole very handsome and worthy the acceptance of a lady for whom I intend it.”

Gay little Williamsburg was a music-loving town, and the diary of President John Blair (1751) makes frequent mention of the musical entertainments at William and Mary College and in private houses. Mr. Blair himself had a spinet on which the ladies of his family played, and when he had friends to dine with him, or when he dined out with friends, he took pains to record, “we had fine music.”

The inventory of Cuthbert Ogle, of Williamsburg, shows that he left, in 1755, a fiddle and case, a harpsichord and a large collection of music, including works of Handel and other famous composers. Dr. Lyon G. Tyler, from a study of Mr. Ogle's belongings, conjures up a quaint picture of him in a green coat with flowing wig, tuning his fiddle as he glances through his spectacles at his music.

Another accomplished musician of the little capital was Peter Pelham, the organist of Bruton Church. In 1769 Anne Blair wrote her sister, Mrs. George Braxton, of “Newington”:

“They are building a steeple to our church, the doors for that reason are open every day and scarce an evening but we are entertained with performances of Felton's, Handel's and Vi-Valley's works, &c., &c., &c.”

In 1770 Landon Carter, of “Sabine Hall,” grouchily confided to his diary—apropos of the popularity of music in Williamsburg—

“I hear from every house a constant tuting may be listened to from one instrument or another.”

He evidently would not have found a congenial companion in his nephew, "Councillor" Carter, of "Nomini Hall" and Williamsburg, who took more interest in "music, heavenly maid," than anybody of the time in Virginia. He was a man of broad culture and devoted to intellectual pursuits. Philip Fithian says that his "main studies" were law and music, and a catalogue of the fine library at "Nomini" given in the tutor's diary bears witness to a remarkably versatile taste. According to it, there were among his folios "17 volumes of Music by Various Authors" and "Alexander's Feasts, or the Power of Music, an Ode in Honour of St. Cecælia by Dryden, set to music by Handel," and among the octavos "Malcolm on Music," "Handel's Operas for Flute, 2 Vols.," and a "Book of Italian Music." The Councillor's favorite evening pastime was transposing music or playing on the flute, violin, or harpsichord. His children were all musical, and the family at "Nomini" may be said to have made a little home orchestra, content to be its own audience or ready to perform for the pleasure of the company that often gathered under that hospitable roof. The tutor caught the contagion and tells of practising sonatas with the master of the house and his sons. One of the boys, Ben Carter, a favorite pupil of Fithian's, played well on the flute, and the tutor paid him half a bit to read or play to him for twenty minutes every night after he was in bed.

In 1770 the Councillor ordered from London, for his house in Williamsburg, an organ made according to directions of Peter Pelham, and he also had "an Armonica, one of the new fashioned musical instruments invented by Mr. B. Franklin, of Philadelphia," and "played on by Miss Davies at the great room in Spring Garden." It was described as "the musical glasses without water framed into a com-

plete instrument, capable of thorough bass and never out of tune."

The local and advertising columns of the *Gazette* show that there were a number of professional musicians scattered about the colony. In 1736 this paper announced that:

"On Christmas Eve, died in Hanover County after a very short illness, Mr. John Langford, a noted and skilful Musician. His Death is much lamented by his Acquaintance in general whose Love and Esteem he had Acquired by his facetious, good Behavior, and the more so having left behind him a poor Widow and six or seven small Children, who tis hop'd will receive some comfort under their affliction from the beneficent Hands of those Gentlemen and Ladies whom he has often delighted with his Harmony."

In 1752 John Tompkins was prepared to instruct "all Persons inclinable to learn, a true Method of singing Psalms, at the College of William and Mary, or at the Church in Williamsburg," and in the same year "Mr. Singleton proposed to teach the violin in Williamsburg, Yorktown, Hampton and Norfolk."

In 1775 "a young lady lately arrived in Williamsburg" desired "pupils on the guitar."

The accommodating *Gazette* also contributes the following:

"To be performed at King William Courthouse. A concert of instrumental Musick, by Gentlemen of Note for their own amusement. After the concert will be a Ball if agreeable to the Company. Tickets to be had at five shillings each."

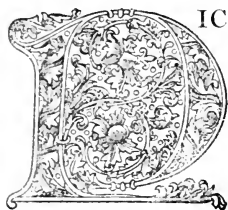
A few months later these unnamed "gentlemen of note" gave a concert and ball "at Mr. Tinsley's, in Hanover Town."

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### XIII

## PICTURES

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**P**ICTURES in Colonial Virginia ran largely to portraits, but there are a goodly number of prints mentioned in wills and inventories, though few of them remain. Many of the portraits, too, have been destroyed by fire and other accidents, and very many of those which have been preserved are scattered through Virginia and other states and known only to those who have fallen heir to them and to their friends. Of the interesting collections which have remained intact, like those at "Brandon," "Shirley," and "Mt Airy," no lists are in print, but from such as are, and are easily accessible, a catalogue of more than two hundred and fifty could be made. From other indications it is believed that at least five hundred portraits of Virginians painted before the Revolution are still in existence. Among the larger collections were those of the Randolphs—about thirty-three in number; the Moseleys, twenty-two—which were long kept together and descended from generation to generation; the Carters, twenty; the Fitzhughs, about twenty; the Byrds, eighteen; the Bollings, sixteen; the Lees, twelve; the Pages, ten or twelve, and a number of other groups almost as large.

Some of the emigrants brought portraits of their ancestors with them from England. The Moseleys had one of a gentleman in armor, and another, still existing, of a lady of the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, wearing interesting jewels—among them a thumb-ring. The descendants of Sir Thomas Lunsford own a miniature of that knight and one of his brother, Colonel Henry Luns-



A LADY OF THE MOSELEY FAMILY

From a portrait brought to Virginia, 1649





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## PICTURES

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ford, of the Royal Army, who was killed in a charge at Bristol, and the Fairfaxes have a number of portraits of English members of their family. A descendant of the Byrds has a charming full length portrait of the first William Byrd, painted during his childhood in England, dressed as a little Roman soldier.

Most Virginia portraits of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries are of men, as there were no painters in Virginia during those years, and many more men than women went "home" and had the opportunity of sitting to English artists. Among women who did were the wife and daughters of Edward Jaqueline, of Jamestown, who was born in 1668. During a visit to England with his family, early in the eighteenth century, he had painted by "an artist of the greatest merit he could find," fine portraits of himself, his wife, his three daughters, and two sons, with the family coat-of-arms and name and birthday of the subject upon the frame of each picture.

Robert Carter, of "Nomini," when in England sat to Sir Joshua Reynolds for a charming portrait which, happily, has been preserved. At least one other Virginian, Warner Lewis, of "Warner Hall," Gloucester, was painted by Reynolds, but the picture perished with historic "Rosewell," destroyed by fire in 1916.

In later years Hesselius, Bridges and Wollaston painted many portraits in Virginia and Peale a few—notably that of Washington as a colonial colonel.

In 1736 Colonel Byrd wrote to Governor Spotswood introducing Charles Bridges as "a man of good family, either by the frowns of fortune or his own mismanagement obliged to seek his bread in a strange land," adding, "His name is Bridges and his profession painting, and if you have any employment for him in that way he will be proud

of obeying your command. He has drawn my children and several others in this neighborhood, and tho' he has not the Master Hand of a Lilly or Kneller, yet had he lived so long ago as when Places were given to the most deserving, he might have pretended to be Sergeant Painter of Virginia."

Bridges was painting in Virginia for years, and a large number of portraits done by him have been preserved. His women are graceful and attractive and generally wear the popular single curl drawn over one shoulder. In 1738 he rented a house in Williamsburg which he doubtless made his headquarters. In 1740 he was employed to paint the King's arms for the Courthouse at Caroline County at the price of sixteen hundred pounds of tobacco.

Here is an advertisement which appeared in the *Virginia Gazette* in 1769:

Henry Warren, limner, who is now in Williamsburg has had the satisfaction of pleasing most gentlemen who have employed him and should any in this place have a mind to please their fancy with night pieces or keep in memory their families with family pieces or anything of the like (landscapes excepted) may be supplied by their humble servant.

If well you're pleased then sure you'll recommend  
Your humble servant to a tasty friend.

Among the possessions of Colonel Thomas Ludlow, of York, who died in 1660, was "Judge Richardson to ye waist in a picture," appraised at fifty pounds of tobacco. John Brewer, of Isle of Wight, left "12 small pictures" in 1669.

Thomas Madestard, of Lancaster, who died in 1675, was another early owner of pictures, while David Fox of the same county left about 1690 "3 pictures in the parlor and 25 Pictures of the Sences in the Hall," and Edward Digges, of York, in 1692 "6 pictures."

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## PICTURES

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Pictures were frequently handed down by bequest, but wills are as tantalizingly indefinite as inventories. In 1700 William Fitzhugh, of Stafford, bequeathed to his son "my own and my Wife's pictures and the other six pictures of my relations," and to his wife "the remainder of my pictures." A portrait of him owned by a descendant is labelled "Colonel William Fitzhugh, aged 40, 1698. Copy by J. Heselius." The date refers to the original.

John Swann, of Lancaster, dying in 1711, left two small pictures and "a prospect of the City of London." Andrew Monroe, of Westmoreland, a great-uncle of the President, left in 1714 "3 large pictures"; Richard Lee, 1714, "Richard's Lee's picture, frame and curtain, G. Corbin's picture, the Quaker's picture, T. Corbin's picture;" William Churchill, Middlesex, 1714, five pictures with gilt frames and one gilt frame "with colors"—doubtless a framed coat-of-arms. "King" Carter, in 1726, left portraits of his children, two portraits of himself and two of his wife. He bequeathed each child "his own picture."

Among the household goods of William Gordon, of Middlesex, who died in 1726, was "The Royal Oak in a frame," and among those of Christopher Robinson, of the same county, 1727, "a picture of the Bishop of London," who was his brother, while the inventory of Colonel Maximilian Boush, of Princess Anne County, 1728, mentions portraits of Queen Anne and Prince George, one picture in a large gilt frame, ten in small gilt frames, two in black frames, two new Maps of London, and a picture of St. Paul's Cathedral.

The inventory of Captain William Rogers, of Yorktown, who died in 1739, mentions "a Dutch picture in a gilt frame," seven "cartoons," four "glass pictures," three "small pictures," and "a neat picture of Charles II."

That of Alexander Spotswood, Orange, 1740, has "26 prints Overton's *Theatrum Passion*," a "Scripture piece of painting, the History of the Woman taken in Adultery"—valued at thirty-six pounds sterling—"20 prints with glasses"—valued at one pound four shillings—and "42 prints with glasses," at three pounds three.

Henry Hacker, of Williamsburg, dying in 1742, left sixteen framed pictures, and Major Harry Turner, of King George County, 1751, sixty-nine pictures "in gilt frames." The inventory of Colonel John Tayloe, 1747, lists among articles in the dining-room "a sett of Rubens Gallery of Lusenburgh."

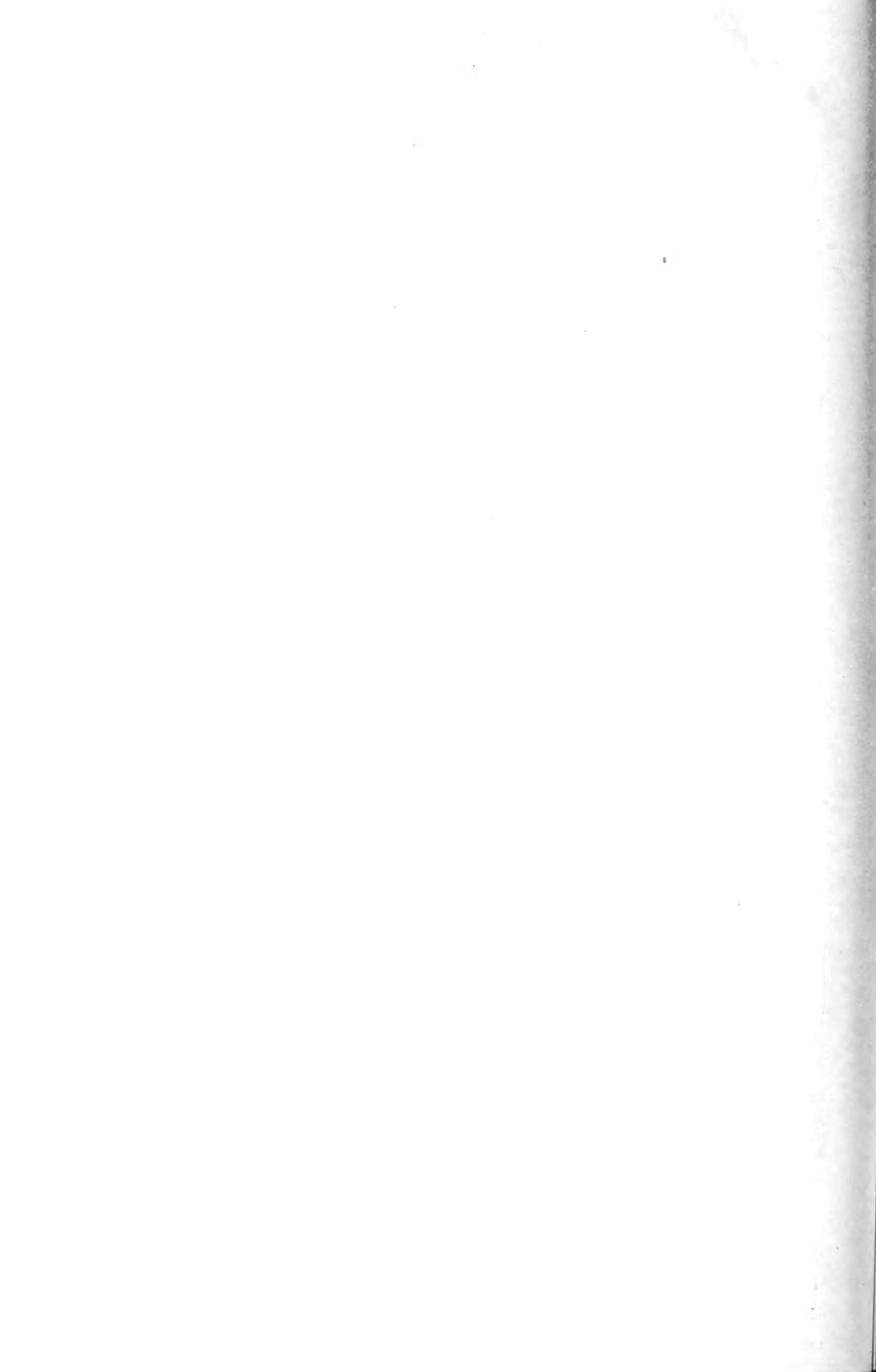
In 1757 Washington ordered from London "1 neat Landskip 3 feet by 21½ inches." A landscape "after Claude Lorraine" was sent him.

Colonel John Tabb, of Elizabeth City, according to his inventory made in 1762, had one dozen prints in frames, and John Pleasants, Cumberland, 1765, "The Ten Seasons," valued at five pounds, and "a prospect of Philadelphia," at eight shillings. George Johnston, Fairfax County, 1767, left two unframed paintings valued at four pounds each, six Hogarth prints, and a family portrait. Hogarth's pictures were in at least one other house in the colony. In a fragment of a letter preserved in the Jones Papers, Colonel Thomas Jones requested his brother, who was studying abroad, to buy him some more Hogarths in London and gave him a list of those he already had. They were "Midnight Conversation," "The Rake's Progress," "The Harlot's Progress," "The Roast Beef of Old England" and—as well as can be made out—"Marriage à la Mode."

According to the inventory of Adam Menzies, Northumberland County, 1767, he had seven engravings from



WILLIAM BYRD, FIRST  
From a portrait brought from England



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## PICTURES

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Raphael's cartoons, four large prints in gilt frames, and one small print.

In the same year the *Gazette* announced:

"Sometime ago the gentlemen of Westmoreland, by subscription, ordered a portrait of the Right Honorable the Earl of Chatham to be put up in their Courthouse. It is now arrived and esteemed a masterly performance and drawn by Charles Peale."

This picture, after a long visit to the Hall of the House of Delegates, in the Capitol at Richmond, hangs again on the walls of Westmoreland Courthouse.

In 1775 Professor Henley, of William and Mary College, advertised for sale "a portfolio of engravings, etchings and Mezzotints—all fine impressions and many of them proofs by the most celebrated Masters," and in the fine house of his contemporary, William Hunter, of Williamsburg, were a "sea piece," a landscape, and a large picture of the "Ruins of Rome," in gilt frames, nineteen prints, and two small pictures "with glasses and frames."

In 1775 also John Champe, of King George County, bequeathed to his wife, Anne—who was the daughter of Charles Carter, of "Cleve"—the "four pictures drawn last by Hesselius, to wit: Colonel Charles Carter and Anne his wife, my own and the said Anne Champe."

A letter written from Virginia about this time mentions the family pictures drawn by Sir Godfrey Kneller, and others, at Windsor," the home of the Claytons, in New Kent County.

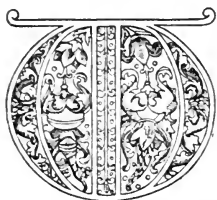
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## XIV

# RELIGION

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WHILE his Majesty's first Colony was not strictly a religious settlement, religious observances were so much a part of the life of the people of the day that such an enterprise could hardly have been launched with this element left out, and in the final orders of the Virginia Company of London to the first colonists before the three little ships set sail from England, they were admonished to

“Serve and fear God the Giver of all Goodness, for every plantation which our Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted out.”

To this the founders of all the American colonies would have said a hearty Amen, but among the incentives which moved the emigrants to Virginia to seek a home in a new world, desire to break away from the faith of their fathers had no part—they brought with them not only the religion of England but the Church of England. When they made, at Cape Henry, their first landing on American soil, they set up a cross and claimed the country for their church as well as for their king—a ceremony which was repeated on one of the islets in the tumbling waters of the James, at the present site of Richmond, when their explorations brought them there on that bright Whitsunday morning a month later. An important member of the first settlement group was Parson Hunt, the Chaplain, who, on June 21—the third Sunday after Trinity—gave them the Communion on the greensward at Jamestown under an old sail stretched from tree to tree. Wherever these men cut down trees and planted a settlement of cabins fashioned



of the green logs, they built a house better than their dwellings for a church, where the familiar rites of the English Prayer Book were used. On August 9, 1619, the earliest legislative assembly in America met in the church at Jamestown, as "the most convenient place they could find," and it is written in the official journal of that historic gathering:

"Forasmuche as men's affaires doe little prosper where God's service is neglected all the Burgesses tooke their places in the Quire till a prayer was said by Mr. Bucke, the minister, that it would please God to guide and Sanctifye all our proceedings to his owne glory and to the good of this Plantation."

There were two or three wooden churches at Jamestown—the first "a homely thing like a barn set on crotchets," and the last a more comely, weather-boarded structure—before the brick church with tower, buttresses, and diamond-paned windows was built upon the same site. In 1623 the settlers in Accomac County worshipped in a small building of "roughly riled logs, cemented loosely with wattle; the whole enclosed by Pallysadoes for protection against ye Indian tribes, an ever present menace to peace and safety."

About 1614 a good frame church had been built at Henricopolis and a brick one was planned. In 1624 a church was under way in Elizabeth City which seems from foundations which have been unearthed to have been, like the last frame church at Jamestown, of wood on a brick underpinning. There was a church in Charles City in 1625 and doubtless there were others, as there were then five or six ministers in the colony.

A long war of words has been waged as to whether the church at Jamestown or its counterpart in Isle of Wight County was the earliest brick house of worship in the

colony—Isle of Wight having persistent traditions, the date 1632 moulded into a brick in its walls and other evidences to support its claim. It was in 1638 that Governor Sir John Harvey in his report to England on conditions in Virginia said:

“ Out of our owne purses wee have Largely contributed to the building of a brick church ”—meaning of course the one at Jamestown, which is believed to have been finished about 1640.

In 1645 Lower Norfolk County had two parish churches which were probably of wood, but in 1691 it was ordered that a “ good, substantial brick church ” be built for Lynnhaven Parish in that county. It was to be forty-five feet long and twenty-two wide, within the walls, which were to be thirteen feet high, with “ brick gable ends to the bridge of the roof ” and a “ brick porch ten feet square.” The roof was to have “ good beams covered with good oaken boards ” and, inside, to be “ well sealed with good oaken boards, archwise, and whited with good lime.” There were to be “ good and sufficient lights of brick, well glazed with good glass ” on each side of the church and “ at the east end a good large window fitt and proportionable for such a church.” There was to be a row of pews on each side and also a “ wainscott pew,” for the use, of course, of persons of importance, on each side. This tiny but well-proportioned and dignified little temple, which has long since disappeared, was doubtless a typical country parish church of the period.

Beverley wrote at the beginning of the eighteenth century:

“ They have in each parish a convenient church built either of timber, brick or stone and decently adorned with everything necessary for divine service.”

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## RELIGION

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In large parishes there were also one or more small chapels of ease for the use of persons living at an inconvenient distance from the church. In building either a church or chapel care was always taken to choose a site near a spring of good water. In 1769 the vestry of the very large parish of Camden, in Pittsylvania County, then on the frontier, ordered at one time the building at different points of three small frame churches—one of them to be situated “at the most best and convenient spring near the Road Ford of Leatherwood Creek.”

During the eighteenth century many beautiful churches were erected in the colony and a good number of them are still in use, while others are in a state of deplorable but picturesque ruin. Bruton Church, Williamsburg; St. Paul's, Norfolk; St. John's, Hampton; Christ Church, Alexandria, and St. John's, Richmond—each of which is surrounded by a graveyard filled with interesting tombs—are especially appealing town churches. Christ Church, Lancaster County, is the finest example of a country church remaining. It was built in 1732 by “King” Carter, whose home, “Corotoman,” was three miles away on the Rappahannock River. From his house to his church he constructed a straight road enclosed on either side by a hedge of cedars along which, in periwig and gold lace and surrounded by his family in attire as dashing, this Virginia grandee passed in his coach on Sundays.

The church, which is built of brick, with walls three feet thick, is in the shape of a Greek cross, measuring inside sixty-two feet from wall to wall each way. The ceiling, which is thirty-three feet high, forms a groined arch above the intersection of the wide aisles which are paved with flagstones. The lofty pulpit with its winding stair, the chancel and the high-backed, box pews, with seats running

all around them, are of black walnut. There are twenty-two of these with a seating capacity of twelve each, and three—which were reserved for the Carter family and dignitaries—that will seat twenty persons each. There were other country churches nearly as impressive as this—notably Matapony, in King and Queen County, and Abingdon, Gloucester County. Many others still were plain, frame buildings, but while some of the more primitive ones doubtless had simple benches, it seems from the records that most of them were equipped with square pews, high pulpits, sounding boards and other churchly furnishings. Pews and sometimes galleries were owned by individuals. In 1735 Edward Moseley, of Lynnhaven Parish, was given permission “to erect a hanging pewe on the north side of the new church at his own cost,” for the use of himself and his family, and in 1772 Wilson Cary directed in his will that his pew in St. John’s Church, Hampton, should “go down with his home to his heirs forever.”

Many of the churches had bells which were sometimes gifts. For instance, in 1760 Alexander Kennedy, of Elizabeth City County, bequeathed forty pounds sterling for a bell for the parish church. Some, though perhaps not so many, had organs. Among these was old Petsworth Church in Gloucester, not a brick of which now stands, whose vestry made “great subscriptions” for the purchase of an organ in 1735 and ordered that seven hundred gold leaves be bought for the use of the painter. Some time before the Revolution an organ was carried over the mountains to the old Lutheran Church in what is now Madison County.

In 1640 Adam Thoroughgood bequeathed a thousand pounds of tobacco to Lynnhaven Parish Church “for the purchase of some necessary and decent Ornament.”



A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY CHURCH—ST. LUKE'S,  
ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY



AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY CHURCH—ST. PAUL'S, KING GEORGE COUNTY



A favorite interior decoration for houses of worship throughout the Colonial period was the framed Lord's Prayer, Creed, or Ten Commandments, which was often provided by bequest. In 1675 John Washington, of Westmoreland, bequeathed the Lower Church of Washington Parish "the Ten Commandments and the King's Arms, to be sent for out of England," and in 1716 William Fox, of Lancaster, left to St. Mary's White Chapel a font and "the Lord's Prayer and Creed well drawn in gold letters," with his name under each of them, set in black frames. There was a rare attempt at elaborate decoration. Old Petsworth had over the chancel a fresco representing the Last Judgment. The picture showed a crimson curtain drawn back and disclosing an angel with a trumpet in his hand, surrounded by rolling clouds from which looked other angel faces.<sup>1</sup>

About 1764 Mrs. Elizabeth Stith, of Surry County, bequeathed fifty pounds sterling to buy "an altar piece" for the Lower Church in Southwark Parish. Her directions were that "Moses and Aaron be drawn at full length holding up between them the Ten Commandments and, if the money be enough, the Lord's Prayer in a small frame to hang to the right over the great pew, and the Creed in another small frame to hang on the left over the other great pew."

There were many gifts and bequests of silk and velvet pulpit hangings and cushions. Among these were pulpit cloths and cushions for the upper and lower Machodick Churches, in Westmoreland, bequeathed by Lawrence Washington, the grandfather of George, in 1697. As early as 1617 Mrs. Mary Robinson, of London, bequeathed to the Church at Smith's Hundred two hundred pounds ster-

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<sup>1</sup> Meade's "Old Churches and Families of Virginia," i, 323.

ling with part of which was bought a "Yellow & blue Cheiny Damaske Carpett wth a Silke fring," a "white damaske Communion Cloath," and a "Surplisse," and also a "Communion Silver GUILT Cupp & two little Chalices in a black leather cover." This oldest colonial communion service in America may still be seen at venerable St. John's Church, Hampton.

A silver communion service in a cloth of gold cover, a crimson velvet "carpet," or pulpit hanging, with gold and silver fringe, and a damask communion cloth which were, about 1621, sent from England for use in the chapel of the ill-fated college at Henrico, were in existence in 1627. In later years there were many bequests of communion silver to Virginia churches—usually bearing the name of the donor and frequently his arms. Among them were the gift of William Burdett, gentleman, to the Lower Parish of Northampton County, in 1643, that of David Fox, to St. Mary's, White Chapel, in 1669, and that of Hancock Lee "to ye Parish of Lee" in 1711. The Reverend John Farnifold left "each church" in his parish in Northumberland County a chalice of silver. Augustine Warner gave a handsome service to Petsworth Church, and Ralph Wormeley one of five pieces to Christ Church, Middlesex. In 1741 John Allen, of Surry, left thirty-five pounds sterling to each of the two parishes in that county to buy services, and in 1748 Philip Lightfoot fifty pounds current money for a "handsome flagon and chalice" with his "arms thereon" for the Church at Yorktown. It is evident that there were silver services in every parish and a goodly number of colonial silver communion services are in use in Virginia churches to-day.

There are frequent references to surplices as gifts, and in 1752 the *Virginia Gazette* advertised as "stolen out of



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## RELIGION

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Ware Church, in Gloucester County, Communion table and pulpit cloths of crimson velvet, double laced with gold, and also a surplice and gown."

Sunday observance and church-going were enforced by law in Colonial Virginia. In the earliest days at Jamestown attendance on morning and evening prayer was required on week days as well as Sundays, and every day in the week, and in 1616 the Governor and Council issued a proclamation that every person must go to church on Sundays and holy days or "lye neck and heels" in the guard house all night and be a slave to the Colony for a week." For the second offence the sinner would be required to serve the colony for a month; and for the third, a year and a day.

In 1626 the Council further ordered that "the Commander and Church Wardens of each plantation take a list of the inhabitants and see that the service of God be duly performed and any found delinquent punished as provided by law." Any man who came to church without his arms was "to receive the same punishment as if he had stayed away," and "every master of a family must call his people together for prayer twice, or once a day, at least."

The General Assembly was as explicit as the Council of State in its insistence upon religious observances. In 1623 it made absence from church punishable by fine of one pound of tobacco for a first offence, or fifty pounds for absence for a month. In 1631 church-wardens were ordered to "levy one shilling for every tyme of any person's absence from the church havinge no lawfull or reasonable excuse to bee absent," and in later years there were repeated acts compelling church attendance.

In 1642 one was passed making it unlawful to "take a

voyage" on the Sabbath day "except it be to church or for other causes of extreme necessitie, upon the penaltie of the forfeiture of twenty pounds of tobacco." In 1704 York County Court made it unlawful for inn-keepers to "sell strong drink or suffer any drunkenness in their houses on the Sabbath."

And these laws were enforced, as hundreds of entries in the council and county court records show. For instance, in 1624 his Majesty's Council ordered that Thomas Sully, who had broken the Sabbath by "going a hunting," should pay "five pounds sterling in good tobacco" toward the support of the church and acknowledge his fault in the presence of the congregation. In the same year William Newman and John Army were fined "for not coming to church, according to the act of Assembly," and in 1626 Thomas Farley, Gentleman, was fined a hundred pounds of tobacco "for not coming to church on the Sabbath day for three months." In 1679 the grand jury of Henrico presented Joseph Royal for playing cards, John Edwards and "one of Mr. Isham's servants" for playing checkers, Henry Martin for swearing and Charles Fetherstone and Edward Stratton for getting drunk and fighting on Sunday, and some years later Henry Turner was tried in the same county for stripping tobacco on that day. In 1704 the grand jury of Middlesex County indicted Thomas Sims for "travelling on the road with a loaded beast" and William Montague and Garrett Minor for "bringing oysters on shore on the Sabbath."

Later in the period Sunday observance was less strict—especially on the part of the laboring people. Philip Fithian wrote in 1774:

"Sunday in Virginia don't seem to wear the same dress as our Sundays to the northward. Generally here by

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## RELIGION

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five o'clock on Saturday every face (especially the negroes) looks festive and cheerful. All the lower class of people and the servants and the slaves consider it a day of pleasure and amusement."

One Sunday when he and the Carters went to church in a boat he recorded in his diary, "The Nomini River alive with boats, canoes, etc., some going to church, some fishing, some sporting."

All sorts of surprises awaited the church-goer in the early days of the colony, and the preacher who could hold the attention of his audience must have been eloquent indeed. Many offences were considered crimes against the Church as well as the State, and it was deemed proper that punishment, or a part of it, should be inflicted within the sacred building and in the presence of minister and people. For instance, in 1641, Christopher Burroughs and Mary, his wife, were ordered to do penance in their parish church "standing upon stools in the middle alley, wrapped in white sheets and holding white wands in their hands, all the time of divine service, and to say after the minister such words as he should deliver unto them." In the same year Edy Tooker was sentenced to do penance in church and "during the exhortation delivered unto her by the minister admonishing her to be sorry for her foul crime did, like a most obstinate and graceless person, rend and mangle the sheet in which she did penance." For which she was "ordered to receive twenty lashes and to do penance according to the spiritual laws and forms of the church of England in the same Chapel Sunday come fortnight."

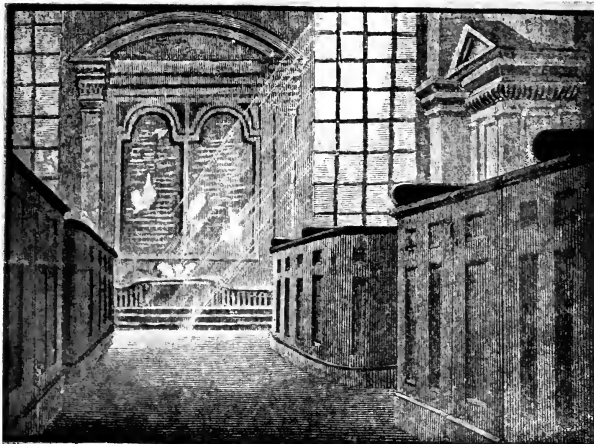
In 1643 Bartholomew Haynes and a woman named Julian Underwood were presented by the churchwardens of Elizabeth River for immorality and were—

"Ordered to stand forth in white sheets in the parish

church at Sewell's Point and, in the face of the minister and congregation in the time of divine service, between the first and second lessons in the forenoon, make a public acknowledgment of their fault and ask Almighty God forgiveness in these express words: ' I, Bartholomew Haynes and Julian Underwood, do here acknowledge and confess in the presence of the whole congregation that I have grievously sinned and offended against the divine Majesty of Almighty God and all Christian People in committing a foul and detestable crime, and am heartily sorry and truly penitent for the same and do unfeignedly beseech Almighty God of his infinite goodness to be merciful unto me and forgive this my heinous offence, and I do heartily desire the congregation and all good people to forgive and pray for me.' "

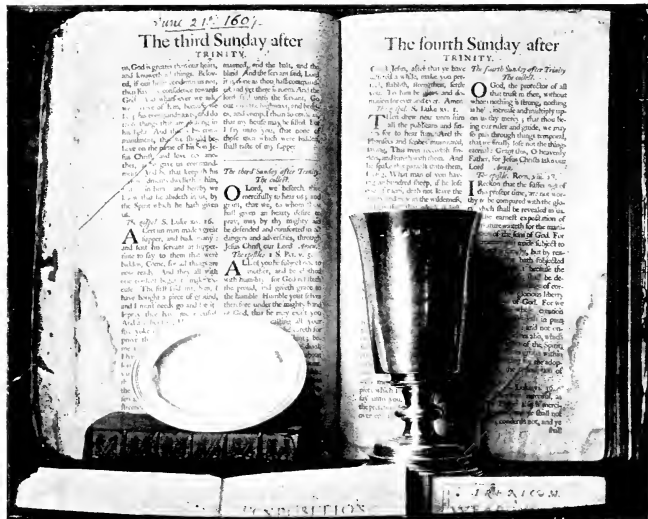
An ingenuity which would have delighted the heart of a Dante was often shown in making the punishment fit the crime. In 1648 Robert Warder, for getting drunk, was sentenced to stand at the door of Nassawattocks Church, Northampton County, " with a great pot tied about his neck," and Samuel Wyard, of the same county, who had stolen a pair of breeches, " to appear during the whole time of service for three Sundays, with a pair of breeches tied around his neck and the word *Thief*, written on his back."

The colonists evidently believed that heathen should be punished with few (or no) stripes in this world, as the Bible gives us to believe they will be in the next. In 1695 Joane Scot, the first Gypsy mentioned in the records, was brought before the grand jury for immoral conduct, but was discharged, as the Court was of the opinion that " the law did not touch her—she being an Egyptian and no Christian woman."



By courtesy of Harper's Magazine

INTERIOR OF CHRIST CHURCH, MIDDLESEX



THE OLDEST AMERICAN COMMUNION SERVICE

St. John's Church, Hampton



The earliest day of public thanksgiving known to have been celebrated in Virginia was March 23, 1623—the first anniversary of the Indian Massacre—and was appointed by Act of the Assembly to commemorate the preservation of the colony from entire destruction. It was ordered that the day be “Yeerly solemnized as holliday,” and in 1624 the statute declared with ingenious variation as to spelling:

“It is ordered, that the 22d day of March be yearelie kept Holy day in commemoration of our deliverance from the Indians at the bloodie Massaker which happened upon the 22d of March 1621”—2.

On April 18, 1644, occurred the second massacre, and the year following we find an act of Assembly:

“That the eighteenth day of April be yearly celebrated by thanksgiving for our deliverance from the hands of the Salvages.”

At the same session the pious lawmakers ordered “for God’s glory and the public benefit of the Collony,” that “the last Wednesday in every month be sett apart for a day of ffast and humiliation, And that it be wholly dedicated to prayers and preaching.”

The two annual thanksgiving days were continued by later Assemblies, but gradually fell into disuse, though throughout the Colonial period, days of thanksgiving or of fasting and prayer were occasionally ordered by proclamation of the governor. For instance, in March, 1692, Governor Sir Edmund Andros appointed “a Solemn fast to implore the blessings of God upon the Consultations of the Assembly,” and in April of the same year another “to avert God’s Judgment upon the Country being sorely afflicted with measles.”

April 8, 1760, was made a day of public thanksgiving for the “signal success of his Majesty’s arms.”

In a country where there was plenty of room for everybody, plenty of timber for building log and frame houses and for firewood, and plenty to eat, want was almost unknown, yet "the poor of the parish" are remembered in many, many wills, early and late, and such gifts were looked after and dispensed by the vestry and church wardens. Here are a few characteristic examples:

In 1625 James Carter bequeathed forty shillings to the poor of the parish and fifty acres of land "bought of my Lady Dale in Shirley Hundred Island" for a "place of residing for the minister." In 1667 Daniel Boucher, of Isle of Wight, gave "to the poorest people in the parish . . . one oxe commonly called Brand, with a good loaf of bread to each of the poor people aforesaid." In 1674 Richard Bennett, of Nansemond, who had been Governor, left to his parish three hundred acres of land, the rents from which were to be received by the church wardens and used for the relief of "four aged and impotent persons," and in 1749 Richard Bennett, then of Maryland, left thirty pounds sterling a year to the poor of the same parish, where he had long lived. In 1683 Robert Griggs, of Lancaster County, bequeathed twenty thousand pounds of tobacco "to those that are indeede truly poore," in 1684 William Gordon, of Middlesex County, a hundred acres of land and two cows to Christ Church parish, and in 1691 George Spencer, of Lancaster, ten thousand pounds of tobacco to the poor of White Chapel parish and twenty pounds sterling for a communion plate. In 1726 "King" Carter directed in his will that some of his "friends and poor neighbors" be excused from paying his estate "sundry debts and balances" which they owed him, and that forty pounds worth of coarse goods be "distributed amongst the poor necessitous people of the parish."



In 1750 Griffin Fauntleroy, of Northumberland County, left six cattle "to the poor house-keepers of Cherry Point Neck," in 1751 Frances Stokes, of Amelia County, twenty-five pounds to the poor of Raleigh parish, in 1762 Charles Carter, of "Cleve," "twenty-five pounds a year for eight years to be divided among the needy families of King George County," and in 1760 John Newton, of Westmoreland, twenty pounds to the poor of Cople parish.

Colonel John Tayloe, of "Mt. Airy," making his will in 1744, and his son, John, thirty years later made unusually interesting bequests to the parish of Lunenburg, in Richmond County. The father left to the vestry three hundred pounds current money, part of which was to be spent upon two young negro men and four young negro women who were to be placed upon the glebe to work for the use of the parish, while the remainder of the money was to be spent in tobacco and corn "to clothe the naked and feed the poor of the parish, not intending to lessen the usual parish allowance to the poor." He also gave two sows and pigs, ten young cows and a bull to be placed upon the glebe. The son left to the minister and vestry five hundred pounds sterling, in trust, "for the use of the poorest inhabitants of the parish, being honest people, to be put on interest and the profits to be distributed every year at the door of the lower church of said parish on Restoration day," when the minister was requested to "give them a prayer and sermon, not mentioning this bequest." He directed that the legacy should "continue forever."

It does continue to-day and the parish still uses a handsome silver communion service presented to it by one of these masters of beautiful old "Mt. Airy."

Bishop Meade's valuable and widely read work on old

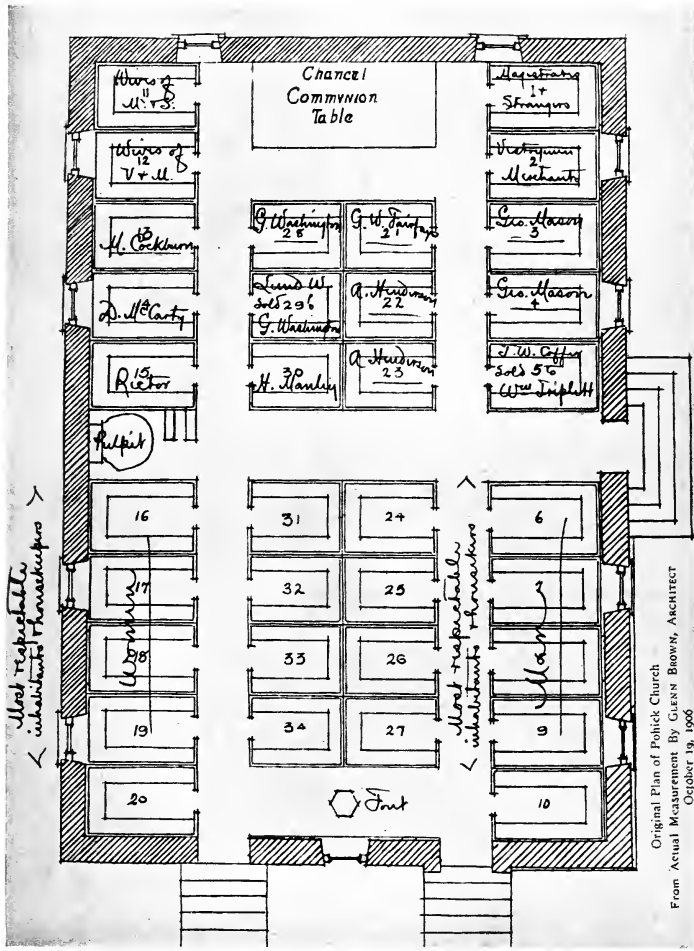
churches in Virginia has produced upon the minds of those unfamiliar with the original records an erroneous impression of the ministers of the colony. The great Bishop was of the extreme evangelical, low church type, and judged the clergy not by the standards of their own time but according to his private opinions. Measured thus even, he was able to brand as men of bad character only some fourteen or fifteen out of hundreds. Among these were a few like Gronow Owen—the distinguished Welsh poet—and Commissary Thomas Dawson, who furnished strange instances of ministers who drank to excess, but were, apart from this weakness, good men.

Some men probably went into the Church in Virginia, as in England, simply as a profession and there were doubtless others who were mere adventurers and would have been unfit for the ministry at any time. But thorough study of all existing evidences makes it plain that the great mass of the Colonial Virginia clergy were well educated and worthy men.

True, the records sometimes show us zealous parish priests censuring their colder and more formal brethren, and during Governor Spotswood's administration, when factional feeling ran high, we find the House of Burgesses, who were bitterly antagonistic to the Governor, condemning the ministers for adhering to him and declaring:

“The Clergy in Virginia are in such precarious circumstances and many of them so obnoxious that if they do not keep in the Governors' favor they run the hazard of losing their benefices.”

But from such light as we have on the character of the clergy of that time no ground for these charges of the House can be found.



Original Plan of Pohick Church  
 From Actual Measurement By GLENN BROWN, ARCHITECT  
 October 19, 1906

PLAN OF WASHINGTON'S PARISH CHURCH



When a clergyman was guilty of conduct unworthy of his calling, there was quick action on the part of the vestries or of the Governor and Council of State. The earliest known instance of such misconduct was in 1625 when the Reverend Greville Pooley—the same that was jilted by the widow Cicely Jordan—and Mr. Thomas Pawlett were brought before the general court for quarrelling in the church at Charles City. According to the testimony, upon St. Stephen's Day, Mr. Pooley and his flock met to pray and also to consider removal of the church to another site—a subject which has always been and always will be productive of bitter feeling among church members. During the discussion a violent quarrel arose between Mr. Pooley and Mr. Pawlett. Mr. Pooley gave Mr. Pawlett the lie, to which Mr. Pawlett replied that the minister was a “proud priest,” a “purjured man” and a “blockhead parson who spoke false Latin and taught false doctrine.”

The court condemned the behavior of the priest as severely as that of his parishioner. Councillor Francis West said that in his opinion “the grossest words Mr. Pawlett gave Mr. Pooley could not equal the lie, which word toucheth his reputation in the highest nature of a gentleman, valuing it as near and dear unto him as his life.” Both offenders were sentenced to ask the forgiveness of the congregation, and Mr. Pawlett was ordered to pay Mr. Pooley three hundred pounds of tobacco.

An example of how the Governor and Council disposed of ministers shown to be men of evil life is found in 1742, when the Reverend Mr. Blewit, of North Farnham Parish, Richmond County, was tried for “drunkenness, profane swearing and other immoralities and misdemeanors.” The charges were proved and the court declared that he

was a "scandal to his function" and recommended that the Commissary deprive him of his charge and the Governor appoint another in his place.

A beautiful church in North Farnham Parish has long been in ruins, but is now undergoing restoration.

Sometimes dictatorial and unreasonable conduct of a vestry made the life of the minister uncomfortable. The vestry was all-powerful. It was composed of the most influential men in the parish, built and equipped the churches and chapels of ease, chose the minister and, upon occasion, dismissed him, collected his salary and provided his glebe, cared for the poor, and looked after the morals of the community.

Some of the complaints made against ministers seem to-day to have been for extremely trivial causes. The vestry of St. John's Parish, King William County, "solemnly declared" to Governor Nicholson that their objection to the Reverend John Monro was not "on account of his being of the Scottish Nation." Nevertheless, they naïvely added, "Tho we must confess an Englishman would be more acceptable." In 1743 the vestry of Charles Parish, York County, brought charges against the Reverend Theodosius Staige, for refusing to christen illegitimate children and opposing singing the new version of the Psalms, and prayed the Governor and Council to remove him. The Council found him "guilty of the several misdemeanors charged against him" and ordered that he comply with the wishes of his vestry or be allowed six months to provide himself with another charge. He not only found a new parish, but gave entire satisfaction in it.

Church music seems to have been a vexed question then, as since. In 1774 the grand jury of Chesterfield County actually indicted the Reverend Archibald

McRoberts, of Dale Parish, for "Making use of Hymns or poems in the Church service instead of David's Psalms, contrary to law." The petit jury found that he had used such hymns after the communion service and after the sermon.

But there is abundant evidence of the high regard in which many colonial clergymen were held. To illustrate: Commissary William Dawson—himself a man of learning and exemplary life—writing to the Bishop of London, in 1734, of the death of the Reverend Bartholomew Yates, says:

"Piety to God and beneficence to men were the only acts of his excellent life. In him wisdom and goodness were eminently conjoined."

In 1730 Governor Sir William Gooch wrote that he had so good an account of the behavior of Reverend Chicheley Thacker while at the University of Oxford, that he had no doubt he would prove an acceptable minister, and in 1745 he declared that the Reverend James Scott "was a man of discretion, understanding and integrity and in every way qualified to discharge the sacred office."

In 1764 the celebrated George Mason wrote a most affectionate letter to the widow of Reverend John Moncure, who had just died, expressing warm admiration of her husband. Plenty of other instances might be given.

As has also happened in later times, pretenders occasionally tried to impose upon the Church. In 1755 this advertisement appeared in the *Virginia Gazette*:

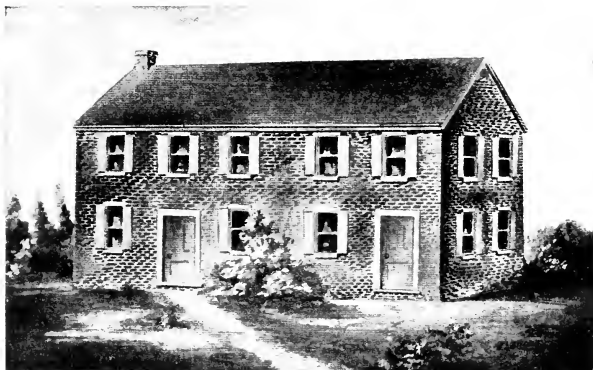
"As a Person pretending to be the son of the late Duke of Wirtemberg, and in holy Orders, and taking upon himself the Names and Titles of *Carolus, Ludovicus, Rudolphus, Wirtemberg, princeps*, A.M., M.D., hath obtained Liberty, according to his report of preaching in

several Churches within this Dominion. This is to give notice to all Ministers and others that the said Person is an Impostor. He is a short, middle-aged Man, a most Notorious Liar and affects to speak broken English. In order therefore to put a stop to this and the like shameful irregularities for the future, His Honor the Governor hereby strictly charges, and commands all Ministers, or in their Absence the Church Wardens, not to allow a Stranger, or any itinerant Preacher, under any Pretence whatever, to officiate in their churches or chapels, unless they have previously qualified themselves, as the Constitution and Canons of the Church of *England* and the Law of this country expressly provide."

For a few years of the first half of the seventeenth century there were quite a number of Puritans in Nansemond and Lower Norfolk counties, but most of these soon removed to Maryland or conformed to the Established Church. During the greater part of the Colonial period there were in Virginia but few dissenters from the Church of England, with the exception of the Quakers—who had all the virtues of their sect, but, save in certain customs peculiar to them, they seem to have lived very much like their neighbors. In the seventeenth century they were subjected to sharp persecution and some of them were whipped, others imprisoned or banished, yet as long as this lasted they increased and prospered. There was happily a cessation of the persecution after James II's declaration permitting liberty of conscience, which was proclaimed in Virginia and ordered to be "celebrated with beate of Drum and the Firing of ye Great Gunns, and with all the Joyfulness that this Collony is capable to Express."

During most of the eighteenth century the Quakers





QUAKER MEETING HOUSE, CEDAR CREEK, HANOVER COUNTY

Built 1770



OLD STONE CHURCH (PRESBYTERIAN), AUGUSTA COUNTY



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## RELIGION

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were permitted to quietly attend their meeting houses, but, like all dissenters, were taxed for the support of the Established Church. Though they far outnumbered any other dissenting body in the colony during most of the period, they were too few to produce any noticeable effect on the manners and customs of the general population.

Before the middle of the eighteenth century the great religious revival which had begun in England spread to the colonies. We have accounts of Whitefield's preaching at Bruton parish church, and at Blandford—when the negroes in the gallery were moved to tears—but it was not until close to the end of the Colonial period that the Virginia Methodist and Baptist churches were founded. These great denominations—which when once started rapidly grew and later became immensely influential for good—just touch the period treated of in this book. The Methodists, indeed, did not regard themselves as a separate body until after the Revolution, for in 1776 they sent a petition to the General Assembly of Virginia protesting against the disestablishment of the Colonial Church and declaring that their denomination, three thousand strong, was “a Religious Society in Communion with the Church of England.”

In the latter half of the eighteenth century by far the largest dissenting churches were the Presbyterians and the various denominations of German Protestants. In the eastern and central parts of the colony the glowing, evangelistic preaching of Samuel Davies and James Waddell, men of great eloquence and ability, contributed largely toward laying the foundation of the Presbyterian Church, but the homes of those who became Presbyterians and of the Presbyterian emigrants into these sections were scattered about among those of adherents of the Established

Church, and but for their religious beliefs and possibly a somewhat greater strictness in regard to amusements, their lives were much the same.

In The Valley it was different. There, in Augusta, Rockbridge, and neighboring districts the population was made up almost entirely of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, while in many places lower down it was composed largely of Germans. These people had their own churches and schools—some of the churches being of stone and palisaded for defence against the Indians—and their habits of life were decidedly different from those of the dwellers east of the Blue Ridge; but by reason of the remoteness of their situation they had little or no influence on the manners of the colony beyond their own limits.

The people of Eastern Virginia, where the Church of England prevailed, have been repeatedly charged with failure to live up to its teachings. It would be foolish to contend that they always did, for Virginia both east and west of the mountains, was settled by human beings, not by saints or angels, and it may be as well to add that any one who imagines that every Scotch-Irishman in The Valley was a godly Presbyterian is vastly mistaken.

In looking back to those days when intense feeling created by differences of creed and opinion carried men in Europe as well as in America any length, it is a subject of gratification to Virginians that, though there was in the colony much irritating and troublesome persecution in the way of fines, and some banishments and imprisonments, no one was ever put to death within its borders for either religious views or witchcraft, nor with the exception of some whippings—not many apparently—and where witchcraft was the charge, a few duckings, were such offenders made to submit to corporal punishment.

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XV  
FUNERAL CUSTOMS

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IN Colonial Virginia funerals were social as well as solemn occasions. When death entered the planter's home, messengers were sent on horseback over land, or by sail or row boat up and down the rivers to notify friends and relatives, while in the kitchen the big pot was put into the little one; for not only did the colonists bring with them the English custom of the funeral feast, but much of the company that would be ere long at the door would arrive hungry after a journey of many miles and would remain several days, consuming a great quantity of food and drink. The funeral expenses of John Smalcombe, who died in 1645, included a steer about four years old and a barrel of strong beer, which together cost nine hundred and sixty pounds of tobacco—nearly four times as much as the coffin, which cost two hundred and fifty pounds. Powder “spent at this funeral” cost twenty-four pounds of tobacco.

The firing of guns seems to have been a regular part of the ceremony, as an act passed by the Assembly in 1655 forbids the wasting of powder at entertainments, “marriages and funerals onely excepted.”

Among the provisions of the funeral feast of Mrs. Frances Eppes, in 1678, were a steer, three sheep, five gallons of wine, two gallons of brandy, ten pounds of butter, and eight pounds of sugar. Later we find the same custom prevailing in The Valley, where, in 1767, one of the bills against the estate of James Hughes was for “making cakes at the funeral,” and in 1774 the funeral expenses of John McClanahan included three gallons of wine, over nineteen gallons of spirits, twenty-seven

pounds of flour and a quantity of cheese, butter, and sugar.

Among other items in funeral bills are "warning to the funeral," "ribbons and scarfing," "sitting up with the corpse," and fees to the minister and clerk.

No doubt the guests for whom the feast was spread wept real tears as, one by one or in groups, they visited the still chamber and looked for the last time on the features of the one they were there to honor, no doubt they recalled with genuine feeling graces of character and mind which suddenly stood out more clearly in the stately presence of death than they ever had in life and which blotted out all recollection of human weakness or fault; yet where congenial friends who had not met for weeks, or it may be for months, gathered under a familiar roof and in an atmosphere mellow with a mutual sense of loss, to spend several days renewing old acquaintance and exchanging reminiscences, the sorrowful occasion would have held its element of pleasure under any circumstances. But there was always at hand a good and sufficient supply of the liquors that are supposed to drown sorrow, and it is more than likely that ere long lowered tones and mournful looks gave way to some degree of hilarity. Thomas Lee, of Westmoreland, said, in his will, in 1749:

"Having observed much indecent mirth at Funerals, I desire that Last Piece of Human Vanity be Omitted, and that attended only by some of those friends and Relations that are near, my Body may be silently interred with only the Church Ceremony, and that a Funeral sermon for Instruction to the living be Preached at the Parish Church near Stratford on any other Day."

Many Virginians of the time in making their wills gave directions in regard to their funerals. Some of these left the details to the judgment of their executors, as did Robert Newman, of Northumberland, in 1655, whose wish

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## FUNERAL CUSTOMS

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was "to be buried in a decent manner according to my rank and quality," but they were usually more explicit. All of the churches had graveyards, but these were used almost exclusively by persons living in the neighborhood or by transients. Far more popular was the family burying ground, to be found in the garden, or at some other convenient spot, on every plantation. Christopher Wormeley, of Middlesex, who died in 1701, directed that he be buried in his garden between his "first wife," Frances, and his "last wife," Margaret; and Robert Carter, who was also twice married, declared in his will, in 1732:

"I order my body to be laid in the yard of Christ Church near and upon the right hand of my wives." He desired a "decent" funeral and a monument the value of his "last wife's." What is left of the "king's" monument shows it to have been one of the stateliest of the period.

Thomas Lee, whose will has already been quoted, gave directions for his last resting place which throw interesting and tender light on his family relations.

"As to my Body," he wrote, "I desire if it Pleases God that I dye anywhere in Virginia, if it be Possible, I desire that I may be buried between my late Dearest Wife and my honored Mother and that the Bricks on the side next my wife may be moved and my Coffin Placed as near hers as possible without disturbing the remains of my Mother."

Frequently the last will and testament was especially particular as to whether there should or should not be a sermon. In 1639 Nicholas Harwood, of the Eastern Shore, desired in his "that Mr. Cotton make a sermon," while in 1645 George Meniffee, the richest merchant of his time in Virginia and a member of his Majesty's Council, directed that he be buried in Westover Church, and left the

minister twenty pounds sterling and a thousand pounds of tobacco for preaching his funeral sermon. The will of George Jordan, of Surry County, made in 1678, contains this unique clause:

“On the 15th day of every October there shall be a sermon of Mortality preached at my house, it being the day my daughter, Fortune Hunt died, and whosoever shall enjoy my land, although it be a thousand generations hence, shall perform this sermon and prayer.”

In 1698 Lawrence Washington directed that his funeral expenses should not exceed three hundred pounds of tobacco, but he wished “a sermon at the Church.”

On the other hand, in 1756, Philip Grymes, of Middlesex, declared that he wished “no funeral sermon—prayers only,” and no one to go into mourning except his wife if she chose, and in the same year Philip Rootes, of King and Queen County, directed that his coffin, which was to be made of planks from his own home, be carried to the grave by four of his negroes and decently interred in the presence of a few neighbors, “without any pomp or funeral sermon,” and that none of his family go into mourning. In 1757 William Beverley, of “Blandfield,” also desired his body to be “as privately interred as may be, without any pomp or funeral sermon,” while in 1762 Edwin Conway, of Lancaster County, directed that the parish minister, Reverend David Currie, be paid forty shillings for reading the burial service over him, but wished no funeral sermon.

Women were as explicit as men as to their funerals. Mrs. Elizabeth Stith, a rich widow of Isle of Wight, in her will made in 1774, appointed her pall bearers and added:

“I desire not to have any funeral but a decent burial, with only my relations and near neighbors at it; and that the parson and clark with the four men that bear me to



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the grave shall have hat bands and gloves; and that I may have a plain, black walnut coffin."

Wills contain many references to the wearing of mourning, besides the hundreds of legacies of mourning rings. For instance, in 1700 George Brent, of Stafford County, bequeathed his brother-in-law and his physician a guinea each to buy black gloves to be worn in his honor; in 1704 William Sedgwick, of York County, left his brother ten pounds sterling, "to buy a suite of mourning," and in 1726 "King" Carter ordered in his will that upon his death all his children and grandchildren be put into mourning at the expense of his estate.

When news had been received in Virginia of the death of the Prince of Wales in 1751, President John Blair, of the Council, wrote in his diary:

"We went into mourning for ye Prince," and three months later he wrote, "This day we went into second mourning."

Sometimes the testator added to instructions for his funeral the inscription for his tombstone. Among these was Richard Cole, a wealthy but dissipated planter, of Westmoreland, who in his will ordered that his body be buried upon his plantation, "Salisbury Park," "in a neat coffin of black walnut, and over it a gravestone of black marble to be sent for out of England," with his "Coate Armour engraved in brass & under it this epitaph:

Here lies Dick Cole a grievous Sinner  
That died a Little before Dinner  
Yet hopes in Heaven to find a place  
To Satisfy his soul with Grace.

The direction for the epitaph was rescinded in a codicil—whether or not the "grievous sinner" or only the grievous poet repented, this witness cannot say. In the older parts of the colony the soil was sandy, with little or

no stone, and all tombstones were brought "out of England."

There was at least one other Virginian who ordered that he be registered in a marble as a sinner, but did not change his mind, for his tombstone with the epitaph given in his will, in 1697, may be seen to-day in Jamestown churchyard and says to every passer-by:

"Here lies William Sherwood . . . a great Sinner waiting a Joyful Resurrection."

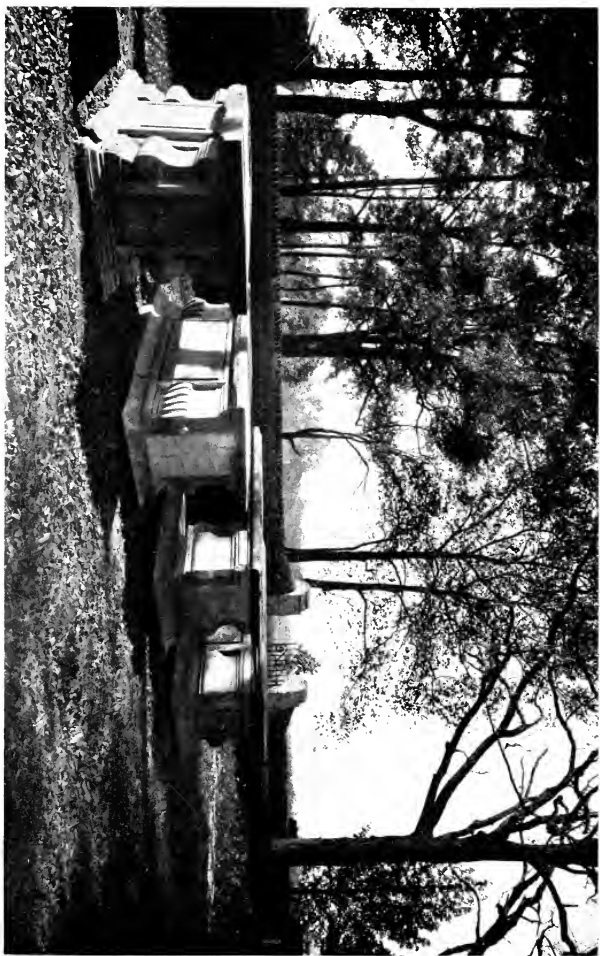
The will of John Custis, made in 1749, is nothing if not original and shows that if he was not by nature eccentric, his stormy married life had made him so. Here are his directions in regard to his burial:

"My Executor to lay out and expend as soon as possible after my decease the sum of one hundred pounds sterling to buy a handsome tombstone, the best durable white marble, large, and built of the most durable stone that can be purchased for pillars, very decent and handsome to lay over my dead body, engraved on the tombstone my coat of arms, which are three parrots, and my will is that the following inscription may also be handsomely engraved on the said stone viz:

"Under this Marble Stone lyes the Body of the Honourable John Custis Esquire of the City of Williamsburg and Parish of Bruton, formerly of Hungars Parish on the Eastern Shoar of Virginia and County of Northampton the place of his Nativity Aged . . . years yet lived but seven years which was the space of time he kept Batchelor's House at Arlington on the Eastern Shoar of Virginia. This Inscription put on this Stone by his own positive Orders.'

"And I do desire and my will is and I here strictly require it that as soon as possible my real dead body, and not a sham coffin, be carried to my plantation on the Eastern

BEWELL, TOAIRS, ABRINGTON CHURCHYARD, GLOUCESTER COUNTY





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Shoar of Virginia, called Arlington, and there my real dead body be buried by my Grandfather the Honorable John Custis Esquire."

If his heir does not carry out his instructions he is to be cut off with a shilling. His instructions were carried out.

The seven years when he kept "bachelor's house" were those after the death of his wife, Frances, daughter of the dashing Colonel Parke.

As to epitaphs, it is of course possible to give here but very few—choosing those which seem especially illustrative of the manners and thought of the time.

The oldest tombstone in Virginia with a legible inscription is that of Mrs. Alice Jordan at "Four Mile Tree," in Surry County. This is the epitaph:

Here Lyeth Buried The Body of Alice Myles daughter of John Myles of Branton, neare Herreford, Gent. and late wife of Mr. George Jordan in Virginia who Departed this Life the 7th of January 1650.

Reader, her dust is here Inclosed  
Who was of witt and grace composed  
Her life was Vertuous during breath  
But highly Glorious in her death.

These quaint inscriptions bring a smile to the lip of the reader of to-day, but amusing as they are, they are instructive too, and throw many side-lights on the life of the people. The mere names and dates which some of them give supply links in family history that without them would be missing. Others connect those who sleep in peace under tombstones in Virginia with their ancestors beyond the sea—as does that of Governor Edward Digges which says that he died in 1675 and was "Sonn of Sir Dudley Digges, of Chilham, in Kent, Knight and Baronett Master of the Rolls in the reign of King Charles the 1st"; and that on the mural monument of William Chamber-

layne, in St. Peter's Church, New Kent County, which declares that that gentleman was "descended of an Ancient and worthy Family in the County of Hereford."

Others still, furnish brief biographical sketches of those whom they memorialize. To this group belong the elaborate epitaph of William Byrd, the second, on his tomb in the garden at "Westover," and that of William Randolph, the second, at "Turkey Island," which not only tells us that he was "of an ancient and eminent family of Northamptonshire," England, but that "Having been introduced early in Business and passed through many of the inferior offices of Government with Reputation & eminent capacity, he was at last, by his Majesty's happy choice and the universal approbation of his country, advanced to the Council," in Virginia. The epitaph concludes a list of Colonel Randolph's many talents and virtues with, "He was conspicuous for a certain Majestic plainness of sense and honor."

If the eulogies of epitaphs cannot be taken literally always, they at least show the ideal of character of the day, for if the subject did not have quite all the virtues the tombstone gives him, they are the ones his contemporaries most admired. A married woman's epitaph generally describes her as obedient as well as affectionate, and a kind mistress to her servants as well as a tender mother to her children—of whom there were likely to be a goodly number. Men were loving husbands and fathers and good masters; maidens were virtuous, beautiful, and accomplished.

Mrs. Elizabeth Lewis, who died in 1672, aged forty-seven, was the "Tender mother of fourteen children," while the tomb, bearing arms, of "Abigail, the loving and beloved wife of Major Lewis Burwell of the County of Gloucester, in Virginia, Gent," declares that "she departed this world on the 12th day of November, 1692, aged

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36 years, having blessed her husband with four sons and six daughters." According to the tomb—which is also armorial—of Catherine, wife of Major John Washington, she was "a loving and obedient wife, a tender and ever indulgent mother, a kind and compassionate mistress." Sarah Timson, who died in 1763, lived only twenty years, but was in that brief space "a dutiful child, obedient wife, tender mother and kind mistress." The tomb of Amy, the wife of Reverend John Richards, who died on November 21, 1725, has a sort of postscript stating that "Near her dear Mistress lies the body of Mary Ades, her faithful and beloved servant," who died two days later.

Rachel, the wife of Thomas Williams, who departed this life on July 23, 1746, was

Sweet natured kind, giving to all their due,  
Supremely good and to her Consort true  
She'd differ not, but to his will agree  
With condescending, sweet humility.  
Tender and loving to her children dear  
And to her servants not at all severe.

Four months after this ideal wife's death the widower consoled himself with a fifteen-year-old bride. On July 14 of the following year the first wife's daughter, Hannah, died and was buried in her mother's grave, and on July 25, just a year and two days after the death of the first wife, the youthful second wife followed her, and over her grave was placed a stone bearing this inscription:

Young men and women all and standers by  
That on these tombs do cast a wondering eye  
Call on ye Lord whilst in your health and youth  
For die you must, it is a certain truth.  
Your life, a shadow, is more prized than gold  
As for example here you may behold  
Beneath these mournful tombs there lyeth three  
Which maketh eight out of one family

Two loving virtuous wives and child most dear  
All died within two days and one whole year  
Whose patience quitted not their silent breast  
But lull'd them into an eternal rest  
To wait in peace until that glorious day  
The trumpet sounds to call them hence away.

This epitaph is one of many which serves the double purpose of a memorial to the dead and solemn warning to the living.

Lettice Fitzhugh Turberville was evidently the model of her sex and time. According to her tomb which bears the arms of Turberville and Corbin, impaled:

From a Child she knew the Scriptures which made her wise unto Salvation: From her Infancy she Learned to walk in the Paths of Virtue. She was Beautiful But not Vain: Witty But not Talkativ: Her Religion was Pure Ferrent Cheerful and of the Church of England: Her Virtue Steadfast Easey Natural: Her Mind had that mixture of Nobleness and Gentleness As Made Her Lovely in the Eyes of all People. She Was Married to Capt. George Turberville, May the 16th. 1727. The best of Wives Made him the Happiest of Husbands. She died the 10th of Feb. 1732, in the 25th Year of Her Age and 6th of her Marriage. Who can Express the Grief. Soon did She compleat her Perfection, Soon Did She finish her Course of Life. Early was She Exempted from the Miseries of Human Life By God's particular Grace. Thus Doth He Deal With his Peticuler Favorites.

All that was good in Woman Kind  
A Beauteous Form More Lovely Mind  
Lies Buryed under Neath this Stone  
Who Living Was Excelled by None.

The armorial tomb of the wife of Thomas Clayton declares:

Here Sleeps the Body of Isabella Clayton While her soul is gone in Triumph to meet the best of Husbands and never more to be Divorced, by him to be taught to Sing Eternal Praises of God & ye Lamb For Ever.



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This inscription seems to speak one word for the wife to two for the husband, but husbands had plenty of epitaphs of their own to bear witness to their domestic virtues. A shining example was William Bassett, of "Eltham," the father of thirteen children, who was "a good Christian, a kind and indulgent father, an affectionate and obliging husband, a good master."

Many tombs early and late, and of both men and women, have Latin inscriptions. That of Thomas Nelson, the emigrant, in the churchyard at Yorktown, bears one, beneath his arms; that of Richard Lee at "Mt. Pleasant" has a long one, that of Benjamin Harrison at "Westover" has twenty-seven lines of Latin with one Greek word, and that of Judith, wife of Mann Page of "Rosewell," bears arms and a Latin epitaph of thirty-four lines.

A perfect epitaph for a young girl is that of the armorial tomb of Elizabeth, daughter of Major John Washington, of Gloucester, declaring that she was—

a Maiden virtuous without reservedness, wise without affectation, beautiful without knowing it.

Other epitaphs are as concise as those of today. For instance that of Mrs. Martha Aylett, 1747, simply tells us that she was "Wife of Philip Aylett and Daughter of the Honourable William Dandridge and Unity Dandridge," and adds her age, date of death, and names of her children.

An air of mournful romance has always seemed to hang about the tomb of the lovely Evelyn Byrd at the site of old Westover Church, and during the nigh two hundred years in which she has slept in it many a stroller on the banks of the James River has paused there to dream of the days when beauteous maidens died of broken hearts and perchance to lay a white flower, typical of her purity, or a red one of the love for which tradition says she sighed her life away, on the moss-fretted stone, and to read her epitaph:

Here in the Sleep of Peace  
Reposes the Body of Mrs. Evelyn Byrd  
Daughter  
of the Hon'le William Byrd Esqr.  
The various & excellent endowments  
of Nature Improved and perfected  
by an accomplished Education  
Formed her  
For the Happiness of her Friends:  
For an Ornament of her Country;  
Alas Reader!  
One can detain nothing however valued  
From unrelenting Death:  
Beauty, Fortune, or exalted Honour!  
See here a Proof!  
And be reminded by this awfull Tomb  
That every worldly comfort flees away  
Excepting only what arises  
from imitating the Virtues of our Friends  
And the contemplation of the Happiness,  
To which  
God was pleased to call this Lady  
On the 13th Day of Novemb 1737  
In the 29th Year of Her Age.

A few weeks after her death the *Virginia Gazette* published this anonymous "Acrostick upon Miss Evelyn Byrd, lately deceased":

E ver constant to her Friend  
V igilant in Truth's Defence;  
E ntertaining to her End,  
L ife! brimful of Eloquence.  
Y outh in Person; Age in Sense  
N ature gave her Store immense.  
B ut she's fled and is no more,  
Y onder soars in Fields of Light!  
R obbed of all our little Store,  
D eath! Oh Death! we're ruined quite.

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